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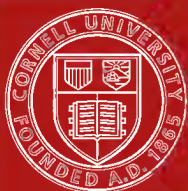
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# A HISTORY OF FRENCH LITERATURE

BY

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## POLITICAL CHRONOLOGY OF FRANCE.

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### HOUSE OF CADET.

Hugh the Great, . . . . .	987- 996
Robert the Sage, . . . . .	996-1031
Henry I., . . . . .	1031-1060
Philip I., . . . . .	1060-1108
Louis VI., . . . . .	1108-1137
Louis VII., . . . . .	1137-1180
Philip Augustus, . . . . .	1180-1223
Louis VIII., . . . . .	1223-1226
Louis IX. (St. Louis), . . . . .	1226-1270
Philip III., . . . . .	1270-1285
Philip IV. (The Fair), . . . . .	1285-1314
Louis X., . . . . .	1314-1316
Philip V., . . . . .	1316-1322
Charles IV., . . . . .	1322-1328

### HOUSE OF VALOIS.

Philip VI., . . . . .	1328-1350
John the Good, . . . . .	1350-1364
Charles V., . . . . .	1364-1380
Charles VI., . . . . .	1380-1422
Charles VII., . . . . .	1422-1461
Louis XI., . . . . .	1461-1483
Charles VIII., . . . . .	1483-1498



## HOUSE OF VALOIS-ORLÉANS.

Louis XII., . . . . .	1498-1515
Francis I., . . . . .	1515-1547
Henry II., . . . . .	1547-1559
Francis II., . . . . .	1559-1560
Charles IX., . . . . .	1570-1574
Henry III., . . . . .	1574-1589

## HOUSE OF BOURBON.

Henry IV., . . . . .	1589-1610
Louis XIII., . . . . .	1610-1643
Louis XIV., . . . . .	1643-1715
Louis XV., . . . . .	1715-1774
Louis XVI., . . . . .	1774-1793
Louis XVII., . . . . .	1793-1795

The Legislative Assembly, . . . . .	1791-1792
The National Convention, . . . . .	1792-1795
The Directory, . . . . .	1795-1799
The Consulate, . . . . .	1799-1804
The Empire, . . . . .	1804-1815

## RESTORED HOUSE OF BOURBON.

Louis XVIII., . . . . .	(1795)-1824
Charles X., . . . . .	1824-1830
Louis Philippe (Orléans branch), . . . . .	1830-1848
The 2d Republic, . . . . .	1848-1852
The 2d Empire, . . . . .	1852-1870
The 3d Republic, . . . . .	1871-

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# FRENCH LITERATURE.

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## I.

### GENERAL SKETCH:—TO THE REVOLUTION OF 1789.

THE French language is one of those languages of the great Aryan family which grew up in Southern Europe from the old Latin stock. It did not spring from the Latin of literature, but from that *Lingua Romana rustica* spoken in the later days of the Roman Empire, with various dialectic peculiarities, over all the outlying provinces. In Gaul this tongue of the populace had already been modified by the Keltic speech which it displaced, as in Spain by the Keltiberian. In the closing period of Roman history it had been further modified by the Teutonic dialects brought in by the Western Goths, the Burgundians, and the Franks. The influence of the Goths, however, was slight and transient, as they ultimately established their power on the southern side of the Pyrenees. The influence of the Burgundians was confined to the regions about the Rhine.

The Franks mastered the country at just that critical period which enabled their ruler to combine the waning civilization of the Empire and the moral vigor of the young Christian Church with the energy of a fresh race, and so to continue the traditions and the prestige of the old Roman Empire into the new order of things. Their adherence, too, to the Athanasian creed gave them an advantage over other Teutonic races, who had embraced the Arian doctrines, in enabling them

to harmonize better with the old Roman world into which they had penetrated.

When first taking their place in history, they were divided into two well-marked groups—the Salian Franks and the Ripuarian Franks. The Salians, at the close of the fourth century, were spread over Holland and the Low Countries. The Ripuarians had settled on both sides of the Rhine as far up as the Main. Both groups were at that time of thoroughly Teutonic blood and speech, except that the Belgian part of the race may have had some trace of Keltic origin.

By the time of Charles the Great, crowned Emperor at Rome in the year 800, the dominion of the Franks had greatly increased, and that wise and warlike prince so extended his rule as to embrace under his sway all the West of Europe. His realm included the whole of ancient Gaul, the greater part of Germany, Spain as far as the Ebro, and that part of Italy still known as Lombardy. This Kaiser Karl, it must be remembered, was in blood and speech a Teutonic prince, though, from his having in later ages become a special hero of French romance under the name of Charlemagne, he is apt to be regarded by ordinary readers of history as the founder of the French monarchy, which is far from being the true conception of his place in history. The truth is, there was no France as yet, and the country of the Franks stretched across what are now northern France and central Germany, taking in the countries now known as Belgium and Holland.

At the close of one of his wars with the Saxons, Charles transported vast numbers of them into northern Gaul, and settled them there. The Emperor Julian, ages before, had done the same thing with the Allemani. These transplantations greatly increased the Teutonic element in the race which afterwards came to be known as the French. With grafts from such various Germanic stocks as the

Gothic, Burgundian, Frank, Saxon, and Allemanic, together with the Scandinavian branch of the Teutonic family in the persons of the Normans, who forced a settlement in the north of Gaul in the time of Charles the Simple, it is no wonder that we find the French language far richer in Teutonic words than any other of the Romanic tongues. There are in them all about nine hundred words of Teutonic origin; about three hundred are common to them all; while French has four hundred and fifty not found in the others.

The French monarchy and the French people really have their historical beginning with the crowning at Rheims of Hugues Capet, Count of Paris, as King of the French, in the year 987. The Franks of the West were then formally separated from the Franks of the East, who remained an integral part of the German Kingdom.

During the previous century, however—that is, from the deposition of Charles the Fat in 887—there had been a practical severance of the West Franks from the East Franks. The men of Latin Francia, dwelling between the Loire and the Seine, and struggling for life and land with the Norman pirates with little aid from their nominal lords in the German land, were growing steadily into a sense of their separate identity. Before the close of that century of isolation and conflict, they were speaking their dialect of the Romanic speech, and were aware that it was something different from German.

South of the Loire, another, though kindred Romanic tongue was spoken. This was Provençal. The rulers in that land were the Dukes of Aquitaine and Gascony and the Counts of Toulouse and Barcelona, who were really independent princes, with but a slight bond of allegiance to the neighboring kings. Its advanced position in the renewed march of progress, after the period of confusion which the fall of Roman civilization brought

upon Europe, is finely described in these words of Macaulay :

“That country, singularly favored by nature, was, in the twelfth century, the most flourishing and civilized part of Western Europe. It was in nowise a part of France. It had a distinct political existence, a distinct national character, distinct usages, and a distinct speech. The soil was fruitful and well cultivated ; and amidst the cornfields and vineyards arose many rich cities, each of which was a little republic ; and many stately castles, each of which contained a miniature of an imperial court. It was there that the spirit of chivalry first laid aside its terrors, first took a humane and graceful form, first appeared as the inseparable associate of art and literature, of courtesy and love. The other vernacular dialects which, since the fifth century, had sprung up in the ancient provinces of the Roman Empire, were still rude and imperfect. The sweet Tuscan, the rich and energetic English, were abandoned to artisans and shepherds. No clerk had ever condescended to use such barbarous jargon for the teaching of science, for the recording of great events, or for the painting of life and manners. But the language of Provence was already the language of the learned and polite, and was employed by numerous writers, studious of all the arts of composition and versification. A literature rich in ballads, in war-songs, in satire, and, above all, in amatory poetry, amused the leisure of the knights and ladies whose fortified mansions adorned the banks of the Rhone and Garonne.”

For many generations this land of culture remained a mark for the ambition of the kings ruling at Paris ; and it was only by slow encroachments, by a long series of conquests, marriages, treaties, and crusades against so-called heretics, that they gradually extended their supremacy over the south. Equally slow was the growth of the French language to the mastery of all the lands in which it ultimately became the national speech—Provence and Languedoc in the south, Bretagne in the west.



Of the two forms of modified Latin which sprang up in Gaul, that which in the end became French was long in imminent danger of being overweighted and absorbed by its rival. The immediate parent of French was the Roman Wallon or *Langue d'Oïl*, spoken in the north. The tongue used in the south, the Provençal or *Langue d'Oc*, in itself far softer and more poetical, was, as has been said, long the vehicle of art and culture. It was the instrument of Troubadour song, the natural language of the new spirit of chivalry.

The political fortunes of the kings of the Capetian line, the extension of the northern speech into England by the conquest of William the Norman, the deadly blow dealt to the development of the south by the persecutions of the Albigenses, all tended to exalt the *Langue d'Oïl* and to crush the vitality of the *Langue d'Oc*.

French literature proper did not begin, then, until the French language had fairly ousted its powerful rival of the south, though there were imitators of the Troubadours among those who used the northern speech before the Troubadours had altogether ceased to sing. When the art of the Troubadours began to decay, the university of Paris was already at a high pitch of celebrity, and the establishment of the Sorbonne soon added to its glory. The fame of these institutions attracted scholars from all nations, and the native language began to assume greater elegance under the light of learning thus held up in the capital of the French people.

Throughout the twelfth century and in the early part of the thirteenth, the Trouvères produced a great number of Lays, some on real, some on imaginary subjects. The Fabliaux and some of the early chronicles also belong to this period. In the thirteenth century was begun by Guillaume de Lorris, and finished in the fourteenth by Jean de Meung, that Roman de la Rose, which Chaucer trans-

lated into English among his first essays in the poetic art. It was a great favorite in France, and long exerted an influence upon the taste and art of many writers.

In that great age, the fourteenth century, when Italy was blossoming into so rich a glory of art and letters, and England was producing her Chaucer, Froissart began French prose in those luminous chronicles in which he described the great wars of Edward with France, wars which he partly witnessed, and in which he may be almost said to have shared. Froissart was on the English side, rather than the French, in these wars; but it must be remembered that he was a subject of Philippa of Hainault, Edward's queen, and that French was the court language in England still, and the Plantagenet princes were not yet English, whatever their island people may have been. Prose chronicles, it should be said, had been written by De Joinville under the last of the Crusading Kings, as well as by Villehardoin under the first Latin Emperor of Constantinople. But, admirable as these works are from some points of view, they are like the lisplings of childhood when compared with the lifelike and many-colored narrative of Froissart; so that French prose may be truly said to begin with him, as English poetry begins with Chaucer.

Next to Froissart comes the historian, Philippe de Comines, who wrote in the fifteenth century and opens the way to the study of the philosophy of history. With Francis I. and his brilliant sister, Marguerite of Navarre, French literature took a powerful impulse forward. Francis himself, with all his faults, was fond of art and of books. The revival of letters had quickened the human mind everywhere in western Europe; and there were many eminent writers in France, both in sympathy with the court and hostile to it on account of its attitude towards the Reformers. Rabelais satirized all parties. Amyot translated the ancients and fos-

tered a sort of heathen republic in the minds of men. Montaigne observed the stir of parties tranquilly, and had doubts and scruples about them all. Ronsard initiated the imitation of the excellences of the ancients in poetry, and carried the age with him into a great stretch of pedantic purism. Calvin, driven from France, established in Geneva a sort of pastoral theocracy, and formulated doctrine and government there for a large section of the Reformed. Queen Marguerite displayed in her writings that curious contrast, so often to be observed in the writers of this age, between the religious side and the artistic side of human nature. One of her books, the *Miroir de l'âme Pécheresse*, a work of religious devotion, had the honor of being condemned by the Sorbonne for its Reforming tone. Another, the *Heptameron des Nouvelles*, an imitation of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, goes even further than that pleasant book in the license of some of its tales.

I have mentioned the efforts of Ronsard to imprison the forms of the language and literature within the narrow limits of rigid rules drawn from the best writers among the ancients. Rabelais, thorough scholar though he was, was bitterly opposed to this exclusive homage to the ancients and submission to their authority; and, though the classical school gained the day for the time and produced at a later period the polished but artificial gems of Corneille and Racine, the spirit of modern French literature is more in unison with the free and riotous fancy of Rabelais than with the stiff and measured march of the school that followed Ronsard's lead.

Rabelais, as a humorist, still holds a high place in the literature of the world, and ranks as a great prose Aristophanes. His fantastical romance of Gargantua is a long series of satirical exposures of all the follies and vices of his day. It is, however, often so foul in its language and licentious in its

exuberant flow of high spirits, that it is not a book to be placed within reach of every comer. Dimitry's *Three Good Giants* strips it of this soiled vesture.

Of all the writers of the sixteenth century that have come down to us, Montaigne continues to be the best known, the most read, and the most dearly loved. The secret of this immortality, aside from his merits as a thinker, lies in the wonderful way in which he has impressed his individuality upon his works. Every reader of the essays of Michel de Montaigne feels that he knows the man personally, and that he is a lovable man to know. One element, moreover, of their charm for us, and a high and honorable trait in the character of Montaigne, is the spirit of tolerance, of true charity of judgment, which the *Essays* breathe. This feature in the man's character is the more wonderful, in that it was wholly alien to the spirit of his age. To these attractions, he adds the charm of an exceedingly clear, sweet, and flowing style, and a reflective temper peculiarly pleasing to the reader of leisure.

Bulwer-Lytton, in one of his own admirable essays, calls him the Horace of Essayists, "an appellation," says he, "which appears to me appropriate, not only from the subjective and personal expression of his genius, but from his genial amenity; from his harmonious combination of sportiveness and earnestness; and, above all, from the full attainment of that highest rank in the subjective order of intellect, when the author in the mirror of his individual interior life, glasses the world around and without him, and, not losing his own identity, yet identifies himself with infinite varieties of mankind." The French language owes much to the inimitably easy style of the old Gascon country-gentleman.

The establishment of the Académie Française, under the auspices of Cardinal Richelieu, formed a

nucleus for the clustering of French literary genius of every order. Richelieu's bad taste and literary jealousies—for he was himself a writer—do not seem to have hindered the development of real genius; and his patronage of bad poets acted as a stimulus upon the good, and gave them the advantage of a foil to set off their own excellence. It was enough that the atmosphere should be literary; genius had a climate to flourish in.

Corneille now appeared to grace the language with his classic tragedies, and his single comedy, the promise and foretaste of Molière's rich fruitage. Drawing inspiration from Seneca and the Latin historians on the one hand, and from the Spanish drama on the other, Corneille gave to the French stage its earlier notemarks of dignity of style and declamatory grandeur of sentiment, too often swelling into bombast in his imitators. We find in our English literature the faults of the French tragic school carried almost to unconscious caricature in the extravagance of Dryden's and Nat. Lee's stilted heroes and heroines. Corneille's finest plays are *Le Cid*, *Horace*, *Cinna*, and *Polyeucte*. To these must be added his amusing comedy, *Le Menteur*.

The next literary period, the age of Louis XIV., for which Richelieu's policy paved the way and prepared the splendors—emphatically the Augustan age of French literature—abounds in great writers of every kind.

The place of Corneille in the tragic world of dramatic literature was fully filled by Racine, who was to the elder poet what Sophocles was to Æschylus. *Phèdre*, that admirable play of passion, was indeed drawn from the *Phedra* of Euripides; but the sober evenness and moderation of Racine's genius bring him into closer relationship with Sophocles. While Racine was enriching the language with powerful tragedies, first on profane themes thrilled through with human love placed in pathetic situations, and in later days on Biblical

subjects carefully kept free from that passion which had kept alive interest in his earlier pieces, the prince of comedy was amusing court and city with his witty ridicule of all the whims and oddities of the day. Molière carried comedy of the purely laughable and fun-moving order to its highest perfection. At the same time, being himself a capital actor and one of the ablest stage-managers that ever lived, as well as dearly beloved by his fellow comedians, he created the celebrated Comédie Française, to this day the living transmitter of all the traditions and prestige of the French theatre in its best days. Molière was thus not only the author whose works we can all read and enjoy, but the power, acting through the coming centuries, by which the art of the player is kept from decline.

The stage showed brightest; but there was scarcely a department of literary art which did not at this time shine with a rich effulgence of light. Pascal, in his Lettres Provinciales and his Pensées, enriched the literature with keen reasoning and profound thinking, expressed in the tersest and neatest of styles. Descartes employed the language with great force and skill in the domain of speculative research, though much of his metaphysics was expressed in Latin. Bossuet, Bourdalone, Massillon, and Fléchier preached in it eloquent sermons and impressive funeral discourses. Fénelon used it in a variety of ways; for education in his romance of Télémaque and in some special treatises; for controversial writings, in which he measured swords with Bossuet; for philosophical disquisition; and for pulpit oratory. La Fontaine produced in it his amusing but somewhat improper Contes and his exquisite Fables; Boileau, his pleasant Satires and Epîtres, and his comic epic, Lutrin. La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère put it to a new service in their epigrammatic Sentences and Caractères. Letters, such as those of Madame de Sévigné; and Memoirs, such as those of Cardi-

nal de Retz and Madame de Staël, and, towards the close of the long reign of Louis XIV., those of the Duc de St. Simon, make a peculiar part of French literature, distinctive indeed, as no other literature possesses so many, so unreserved, and so ably written private records of individuals and families.

This age was followed by the one immediately preceding that great rising of the oppressed commons of France, known as the first French Revolution. It was characterized by a singular passion, in court circles and among the literary men of the day, for skepticism in the moral and religious field of thought, and a speculative furore for fraternity, liberty, and equality, in the political and social sphere.

The leaders of thought, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Buffon, were all deeply imbued in different ways with the spirit of the age, and did much to bring about the tremendous results of the next century.

Montesquieu, in his *Lettres Persanes*, satirized the life of his day, religious, political, social, and literary. In his *Considérations sur les Causes de la Grandeur et de la Décadence des Romains*, he threw out many admirable suggestions toward the study of the true philosophy of history. In his *Esprit des Lois*, he ably investigated the principles which lie at the foundation of organized society. The supporters of civil liberty in every land owe a debt to Montesquieu for the impulse which he gave to studies into its nature and principles.

Voltaire has a bad name with serious persons. But, with all his faults, he was a great light in French literature and an able worker in the cause of human progress. He laughed down many abuses. So universal was his genius, though never of an exalted type, and so great his versatility, that it would be useless in a brief sketch like this to so much as name the many fields of literature



in which he shone. His long warfare with existing institutions went far to destroy the faith of his contemporaries in them, and helped to pave the way for the great Revolution.

What Montesquieu did by acute speculative thought and Voltaire by keenest ridicule, Rousseau did by sentiment. Never was work more filled with impassioned sentiment than Rousseau's Confessions. His whole charm lay in this appeal to the sensuous part of our nature. His philosophical notions and socialistic opinions are worthless; but they chimed in with the growing beliefs of his day, and there was therefore great practical power in his *Contrat Social*, feeble as its whole system of sociology is to thinkers of our time.

Buffon's contribution to the destructive ideas by which the writers of this period prepared the way for the Revolution, was not important. He was, from that point of view, only one among the deistical scientists of his time. But, in a literary light, he was a noble figure of the age. His *Histoire naturelle*, faulty enough considered as a scientific work, popularized the study of nature by the beauty of its style and the charm of its method. His style is noble and eloquent, and his love for nature sometimes exalts the language of his descriptions to true sublimity.

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's lovely little prose-idyll *Paul et Virginie*, serves as a stepping-stone between Rousseau and Chateaubriand. It has the tenderness of sentiment which the impassioned Jean-Jacques had brought into fashion, and at the same time the devotion to wild nature which Chateaubriand was to enter upon in the next generation with such enthusiasm. His *Chaumière indienne* and *Voyage à l'Isle de France* exhibit the same characteristics.

Helvétius, materialistic philosopher; Diderot and d'Alembert, the encyclopedists; Condillac, the metaphysician; Crébillon, the dramatist; his son,

Crébillon, the indecent romancer; Beaumarchais, the brilliant writer of comedy and unconscious herald of the Revolution; and Le Sage, the creator of Gil Blas, all belong to this period.

Le Sage, in permanence of literary fame, is by far its greatest name. The others are marked names, and their works are much talked about; Le Sage is read. Only sections of the reading public read here and there a work of Voltaire or Rousseau. Everybody reads Gil Blas, if not in the original, at least in translated form. Eminently original and thoroughly French, though borrowed in a general way from the Spanish *picaresco* romances, it holds its own even with modern readers, not only from its entertaining vivacity, wit, and humor, but because it is so true to human nature in all time. To use the words of Bulwer-Lytton, in his *Essay on Knowledge of the World*:

“The knowledge of life it illustrates is so vast, that, in substance, it remains to this day the epitome of the modern world. Amid all the mutations of external manners, all varying fashions of costume, stand forth in immortal freshness its large types of civilized human nature. Its author is equally remarkable for variety of character, formed by the great world, and for accurate insight into the most general springs of action by which they who live in the great world are moved. Thus he is as truthful to this age as he was to his own.”

We have now reached the eve of the French Revolution of 1789. With that tremendous event, all changes in the world of French thought and feeling. The old disappears in blood. The classic taste in literature vanishes with the pomp of the *ancien régime*; laws and letters for awhile yield to arms, and at the next breathing-place French literature assumes a new phase.

## II.

## SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1789.

BEAUMARCHAIS, the author of those witty comedies, *Le Barbier de Seville* and *Le Mariage de Figaro*, was the immediate precursor of the Revolution of 1789. He it was who, by bitterly satirizing in his famous *Memoires* the infamous *Parlement Maupeou*, showed the poison that was sapping the very life-blood of national existence. He it was who gave the finishing stroke in the war of the wits against the already tottering edifice of absolutism in France.

Voltaire had broken the spell of religion such as that age knew it—a superstition or a hypocrisy. Rousseau, in passionately advocating the rights of man, had dimmed the prestige of birth and rank. Beaumarchais, in lifting the veil, with unrivaled skill as a pleader of his cause, from the court that was bribed to wrong him, revealed the utter corruption that was poisoning the fountains of justice, and opened the eyes of the people to the fact that their last safeguard against tyranny was gone. His brilliant attack excited the admiration of Voltaire, whose pen had often served the same cause and had been dipped in the same gall. Villemain lavishes his eulogies upon the art of Beaumarchais' forensic eloquence:

“That art of filling with venom things the most innocent, of mingling with a seemingly simple narrative little calumnies, of lying with grace, of insulting with an air of candor, of being ironical, biting, pitiless, of plunging the point of sarcasm into the wound already made, then of appearing serious, conscientious, reserved, and soon after of harking on a full cry of bad passions all for

the good of the good cause, of interesting self-love, of amusing malice, of flattering envy, of exciting fear, of rendering the judge an object of suspicion to the audience and the audience terrible to the judge; that art of humiliating and of attracting, of threatening and of imploring; that art, above all, of causing his adversaries to be so laughed at that one begins to believe that people so ridiculous can never be in the right; in fine, all that arsenal of malice and of eloquence, of wit and of passion, of reason and of invective,—this is what makes up some part of the *Memoirs of Beaumarchais*!”

The same potent spirit of irony flamed triumphantly through the scenes of his brilliant comedies. The age demanded tremendous negation of every force that held authority in the land, for all were supporting tyranny and oppression and misrule. In all the literature of the day this destructive philosophy found a vent; but it was especially potent on the stage. In tragedy, there were incessant tirades against fanaticism. In comedy, there were as ceaseless utterances in favor of equality. In the comedies of Beaumarchais, the fire burned more fiercely and with a brighter and more beautiful blaze than elsewhere. His *Figaro* has been said to have given the signal and the programme of the Revolution. He is the representative of the superior intelligence that finds itself in a state of social inferiority. He shows the disaccord of organized society, the unhappy contrast of capacity and condition. It was madness in the government of the day to have permitted the representation of a piece which brought the light of genius to bear upon such inequalities.

The strange thing about it all is that the ruling class felt vaguely what was coming, and yet made no provision for the evil days. Louis XV. said, “It will last my time.” No effort was made to reform the state. The *Parlement*—which was the judicial body in France—held stoutly to its privileges; the court continued its abuses; the clergy

kept up the spirit of intolerance; the nobles abated not one jot of their outrageous claims; the king held firmly to the traditions of arbitrary power.

At last the storm burst, and all was swept away—the whole order of things that belonged to the France of Louis XV. In the whirl of tragic events, there was no room for literature. Men do not create art when the house is tumbling down upon their heads. The reign of the guillotine was not propitious to the growth of taste. Anarchy led to the Empire; but the first Empire was one long series of wars, and what literary workers there were, were either in opposition or ready at a moment's warning to take that position. Madame de Staël was of the first class; Chateaubriand, of the second.

They were the first of the romantic school in France. Rousseau and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre had given the impulse and had some share in furnishing them with the keynote of those prose-poems by which they are best known. But it was they who first fairly introduced their countrymen to new ideas and made them take an interest in a world outside of France. Madame de Staël studied Germany, and wrote a book about it. *L'Allemagne* showed the new influence and the new tendency. Like the Germans—Goethe and the rest—she went to Italy, too, for inspiration; and the new romantic spirit, revealed in her *Corinne*, fed its nascent fervors on the still smouldering incense of the old classic and mediæval art.

Chateaubriand, singular compound of reformed skeptic and of a politician oscillating between republicanism and legitimacy, drew a fresh source of inspiration from his travels in America, where he was especially impressed by the wild forests still haunted by bird and beast alone and the mighty river down the long course of which La Salle had lately made his lonesome way. These and the relics of a civilization found among that singular

tribe, the Natchez, seem to have greatly struck his imagination. His *Atala*, his *Génie du Christianisme*, his *Les Martyrs*, prompted by the wonders he had seen and by the enthusiasm which Christian heroism produced in his susceptible spirit, exercised a powerful influence, though not a permanent one, upon the age. His little pamphlet, *De Bonaparte et des Bourbons*, was declared by Louis XVIII. to be worth an army of 100,000 men in favor of the royalist party. Yet he had been an ambassador in Napoleon's service, until the murder of the Duc d'Enghien. Nor did Chateaubriand remain the staunch royalist he must have felt himself to be at the time he produced the pamphlet so much extolled by the Bourbon prince. In his last political work, he sets forth as his political creed: "I am a Bourbonist in honor, a Monarchist on grounds of rational conviction; but in natural character and disposition, I am still a Republican."

He was a brilliant and effective writer, of warm imagination and fine powers of description; but in all that he has written there is a want of a sound philosophic basis. He lacks depth and solidity, and reminds us of wine that has a fine sparkle and pleasant flavor, but is deficient in that quality which connoisseurs style "body." There is in his literary merits and demerits a marked resemblance to Lamartine, or, to speak more justly, it should be said that Lamartine resembles him.

After the Napoleonic age came the romantic revival, with an especially brilliant luxuriance in the outgrowth of fiction and of comedy. We shall find the withering influence of Voltairean unbelief and the sensual influence of Rousseau's sentimentalism, like two noxious plants flowered into full bloom, both impressing themselves still upon a large portion of this later literature.

The gay songs of Béranger, that went to the heart of a people naturally joyous, had the effect,

during the dull period of the Restoration, of restoring that easy temper and fondness for amusement which the horrors of the Reign of Terror and the ceaseless conscriptions of the Emperor had for so long a time made impossible to the French. Béranger was thus, all unconsciously, the cause of a return to the old passion for the stage, although the pleasure of the Parisians in that form of amusement had never wholly lapsed.

“The stage in France,” says M. Francisque Sarcy, “is a national and especially a Parisian pleasure. Molière, Reynard, Beaumarchais, Voltaire, Scribe, and many other less celebrated dramatic authors were born within sight of the walls of Paris. Everybody in Paris is fond of the play, and is a good judge of it. Even at the present moment, when this passion is not so strong as it used to be, many a young man will go without his dinner in order to treat himself to the play. How many will stand for three or four hours together at the doors of a theatre, in the midst of rain or snow, to see the piece that has caught the taste of the public! Everything that relates to dramatic literature is warmly discussed, and there is not a woman, however imperfectly educated she may otherwise be, who is not capable of giving expression to her opinions on theatrical matters, with a knowledge of the subject sometimes astonishing. Every soil has its own peculiar virtues; in the same way every nation has its own peculiar aptitude. The passion of the French is the stage.”

Napoleon loved the theatre, and, while his jealousy of public discussion had an injurious effect upon the development of literature under the Empire, he fostered the great company that was proud of calling itself *La Maison de Molière*—I mean, the famous *Comédie Française*—with aid from the public treasury.

The social changes brought about by the Revolution furnished the stage with a new audience. The Court was no longer the arbiter of taste. For some time after the Restoration, the *bourgeois* public passed judgment upon the pieces represented



and the actors who played in them. "They were called," says M. Sarcey, "the *habitués* because they went to the theatre every night; and when the actor, entering on the scene, perceived those long rows of bald and shining heads, on which the chandelier shed its rays, he was seized with a slight trembling. I saw the last remnants of this circle in my youth: to-day they have entered into the category of fossils."

These solid old citizens of Paris were tenacious of the past; they clung to tradition, and retarded the advancement of dramatic literature. Aided by such an audience, the superb acting of Rachel alone kept up the classic stage, in opposition as it was to the tastes and aspirations of the younger generation. The revolt of the romantic school against the fetters of classicism began about the year 1830. The spirit of revolution was astir then, but the classic drama still continued to hold the old House of Molière. It was only after the Revolution of 1848 that the new romantic school fairly succeeded in overcoming the prejudice of the public in favor of the classic drama, and gained a footing even on the stage of the *Théâtre Française*. Of these who won distinction in dramatic composition in these later days I can mention here only the names of Boursault, Regnard, Legrand, Lemercier, Victor Hugo, Dumas, Scribe, Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset, and Octave Feuillet. Some of these merit and will receive fuller mention.

But the greatest development of modern French literature has been in the form of fiction. Especially in romantic fiction has this development taken place, for the French have a gift in that direction. They have never yet been excelled in the construction of the plot, they have a fine feeling for sentiment, they are keen observers of life and manners, they have a wholesome horror of wearying the reader by serious digressions, they are care-

ful and patient in their workmanship, and they pay great attention to style.

If there is a philosophy at the bottom of their pictures of life, they are far too artistic to bring it to the front. If they describe minutely, they take the greatest pains that the descriptions shall be picturesque or else amusing. There is little of that humor which, in English literature at its best, blends philosophic reflection with feeling in so subtle a way that oftentimes the smile and the tear are almost equally ready to come at the waving of the enchanter's wand. But there is, in the place of humor, a sparkling wit, an engaging vivacity, a charming archness, that one finds rarely in English writers.

There is not much real appreciation of country scenery—one of the sweetest traits in the art of English genius—except in George Sand (Madame Dudevant) and a few others. But the life of cities, and especially of Paris, is made as familiar to us as if we had grown up amid the same scenes; and there is no literature which can excel the French in these realistic pictures.

Alexandre Dumas, the elder, the most prolific of them all, is also the most dashing and vivacious of these romancers—a Murat among story-tellers. He is also one of the most entertaining, and is perhaps the best known in this country, having myriads of readers everywhere. The catalogue of his writings numbers several hundreds of volumes, and they all belong to the type of the sensational romance. Most of them deal with past times, and profess to be historical novels, though they are true neither to character nor to fact. Very many of them were written in a sort of literary partnership by men who found it pay them better to publish under Dumas' name than under their own. Dumas supervised them and gave them the final stamp of his own rapid and readable style. But his real masterpieces were unquestionably wholly his own

work. Such were *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*, and his inimitable books of travel.

Eugène Sue takes rank with Dumas as of the sensational school. He excelled in intricate and ingeniously complicated plots. His energetic movement kept up the interest of the reader at every stage of the action. He especially understood the art of contrast, and by the use of powerful dramatic situations urged the mind of the reader to intense excitement. Nothing could remove the spell until the last page was reached, and then there remained long hovering over the imagination, weird phantoms and wild visions, that mesmerized the spirit into a longing for the renewal of the feverish intoxication. There was peril for young minds in this over-heating of the brain, and at the same time Sue's political and social ideas were eminently dangerous. It is likely that the crude philosophy of Communism owes not a little to the deep impressions made on the lower classes by the propagandism of immature minds that had fed on the unwholesome thought fermenting in *Les Mystères de Paris*, *Le Juif Errant*, and *Mathilde*.

Equally sensational, and in a really insane way at times, but widely different in personal pride, in intensity of conviction, and in style, from Dumas and Sue is Victor Hugo. The author of *Notre Dame de Paris*, of *Quatre-vingt-treize*, of *Les Misérables*, with a wild and lyrical style, sometimes absurdly oracular, sometimes epigrammatic, sometimes as fantastic as that of Carlyle, has produced remarkable pictures—pictures, it is true, of a life rather ideal than real, but still pictures of what might be true. He is a poet always, whether writing in verse or in prose, and as a poet he is a fine manifestation of the Gothic type as distinguished from the classical. Hugo rejects form, and puts his faith in the idea he would express: hence the frequent uncouthness of his form and the cloudi-

ness of the idea. He represents a French type at the very antipodes in its remoteness from that type represented by Racine or Molière, or even by Voltaire and Le Sage.

Balzac gives us another type. He is the profound analyst of the human heart, the subtle searcher into its follies, its frailties, its whimsies, its passions, but morbid and bitter in the effects he produces. He is perhaps best known by his *Le Père Goriot*, *La Peau de Chagrin*, and *Eugénie Grandet*.

There was greater variety in Madame Dudevant. She wrote at first in conjunction with Jules Sandeau and from him adopted part of his name, so as to be known in literature as George Sand. Full of poetic fancy, gifted with a graceful and lucid style, impassioned in her own nature, and yet versatile enough to escape the monotony of passion—perhaps through the largeness of her sympathies—she charmed and entertained many different classes of readers. Her *Indiana* and her *Jacques* were romances of the passions. Her *La Petite Fadette*, *La Mare d'Auteuil*, and *Nanette* were simple, touching country-stories, almost pastorals. Others of her numerous works were *Lélia*, *Mauprat*, *André*, *Consuelo*, and *Flammurande*. The story of her life is a curious one, and there is an especial interest in the account of her relations with Alfred de Musset, that unhappy poet whose rich fancy and melodious utterance unluckily charmed her for awhile and entrapped him into an ill-assorted, as well as unlawful, union. Madame Dudevant's life was immoral, and so were her earlier books; but the ferment in her genius seems to have worked off in the course of time, and left pure wine.

Paul de Kock, though making no insidious attacks on morality, won the reputation of an audacious tempter of the young into the paths of sin. He certainly is not clean, yet there is a hearty jovialty about him, a robust vitality, that makes

him a far less dangerous sinner than are those sentimental novelists who suggest immoral thoughts, or preach an immoral creed, without venturing to name the sin toward which they cluster. He was a prolific writer, both of novels and of vaudevilles. His son, Henri, has written novels of the same order.

To these romancers must be added a few others of note. There is Edmond About, in his later years almost wholly devoted to journalism and politics, but whose *Tolla*, *Le Roi des Montagnes*, *Germaine*, *L'homme à l'oreille cassée* and *Le Cas de M. Guérin* have won him no mean name among writers of fiction. His works, fictitious and political, are marked by trenchant sarcasm and fine irony, as well as by original surprises.

There are Ernest Feydeau, the author of *Fanny*, a novel of thoroughly maudlin sentimentality; and Flaubert, whose *Madame Bovary* is a romance of the grossly physiological type; and Adolphe Belot, whose *Femme de Feu* is also a picture of sensual passion.

I should name too Jules Sandeau, to whom we owe a fresher and sweeter strain in his charming romance of *Madeline*. Then, there are Soulié and Souvestre and Méry; Alphonse Karr and Paul Féval; the younger Dumas, Murger, and de Mircourt; de Stendhal, and Chevalier. To these may be added Charles de Bernard, Prosper Mérimée, Jules Claretie, Théophile Gautier, and those literary partners, Erckmann-Chatrian, who have done so much for the delineation of Alsatian life. Then, there are Émile Gaboriau, who imitated Poe in his minuteness of detail and ingenious literary puzzles; Jules Verne, who struck out the new line of calling the wonders of science to the aid of fiction, and who seems exhaustless in the department he has created; and Daudet and Zola, who agree in their cynical realism and contempt for decency, though Zola seems to revel in the filth of all that misery, vice, and crime which he depicts with so repulsive

a minuteness, while Daudet has the art to turn his gaze away from the utterly unclean.

The animated pictures of Russian life, painted by the lady who calls herself Henry Gréville, furnish a pleasant relief to all this vile prostitution of art.

Of the poets, Béranger, often styled the Burns of France, the greatest of her song-writers; and Lamartine, most sentimental of sentimentalists, belong to the period of the Restoration. Victor Hugo ranks high as lyric poet, as well as among the dramatists and romancers. De Vigny and De Musset have left their mark on the poetry of French literature, both being singers of melody and power. Sainte-Beuve's reputation rests chiefly upon his admirable criticisms, but he also sought to win fame among the poets of the romantic school. Baudelaire was emphatically the poet of unrighteousness and of despair, admiring Poe, translating and imitating him, and producing the kind of poetry that lust, opium, and hunger might combine with a certain lurid style of genius to form. Yet, in the case of poor Baudelaire, *absinthe* may have painted all those effects which I have imagined three potent demons to be responsible for.

Of the critics the most eminent in modern times have been Sainte-Beuve, Armand de Pontmartin, and Jules Janin, in the field of French literature. Henri Blaze is the chief critic and historian of German literature; and of English literature H. A. Taine is confessedly the best historian of literature in any language. The authors of histories of French literature, either for certain periods or for the whole of its extent, have been numerous. Some of them have discoursed only on the Latin literature produced in Gaul, and yet have called their works Discourses on French Literature. The greatest names among the writers of this class, and of that which gave some account of French literature proper, are Littré, Villemain, Gérusez, Demo-

geot, Vinet, Nettement, Albert, Charpentier, Cart, Marque, Nisard, and Sainte-Beuve.

The historians must be mentioned with equal brevity. They are Barante, the author of *L'Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne*; Guizot, the author of *L'Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe* and the *History of France*; Thierry, the author of *L'Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normans*; Lamartine, the author of *L'Histoire des Girondins*; Michelet, the author of *L'Histoire de France*; together with Thiers, Martin, Delord, Lanfrey, Lenormant, and a great many more.

In metaphysics, the chief names are Victor Cousin, Jouffroy, Janet, Lacour, Laugel, and Véra. In Christian morality and ecclesiastical dogma, the most eminent writers are Laménais, with his memorable *Sur l'Indifférence en Matière de Religion* and the very different *Paroles d'un Croyant*; Lacordaire; Montalembert, and Dupanloup. In political philosophy, there are Chevalier, De Tocqueville, and Bonald. In philology and archæology, the great names are Champollion, De Sacy, Renan, Rémusat, Littré, Bida, and Gaston Paris. In socialistic propagandism, there are three great visionaries, Comte, St. Simon, and Fourier. In the sciences, the French have won high distinction in that world-literature, which utters itself in every civilized tongue. Among the great names are those of Cuvier, the father of anatomy; Ampère and Arago, distinguished in so many sciences; La Place, Gay Lussac, and Legendre.

In the rapid enumeration just made, there have necessarily been omitted the names of many writers who have a world-wide reputation. Such, for instance, are Saintine, the author of that charming tale of prison-life, *Picciola*; Laboulaye, a most versatile and excellent writer; Madame Craven, the author of several tender and thoughtful romances of deep, religious tone; and Madam de Ségur, whose fairy tales are fresh and sparkling.

It is pleasant to be able to say, in closing this brief review of recent French literature, that the turbid stream of unbridled passion, which, like the rushing torrent from the mountain, swept away with the primness of the classic fountain and mimic lake their limpid purity too, has begun to exhaust its force and seems to be depositing its sediment and gradually clearing. The strange and offensive phenomenon of a Zola stirring up the marsh-mud at the bottom serves only to mark more strongly the general change for the better. Decency will yet come back to cleanse the French imagination.



## III.

## LAYS OF THE TROUVÈRES.

HAVING given a general outline of French literature, from the earliest utterances of the race in a language which they realized to be something different from broken Latin, down to the writings of our own day, I now turn back to invite your closer attention to single periods, or even, in some instances, to individual writers of marked eminence.

First, then, let us look more closely into the earliest literature of the French.

The provençal literature, though the prelude to that of the Trouvères of the North, cannot fairly be classed as a part of French literature, since both in language and in sentiment it is more nearly allied to the Italian and the Spanish. Properly speaking, it stands apart as an independent literature, from which all its neighbors drew inspiration; the Suabian Minnesingers coming nearest to it in spirit and form.

I have already given a general account of the origin of the French language, and shall not here pause to describe in detail its gradual development. It was still in a crude and formative condition in the twelfth century when those lays were produced which the spirit of chivalry gave birth to.

The youth of great races always passes through the stage called the Heroic Age, and we find the same general characteristics in all races at this stage, whether we read of the Achæians in the lays of Homer, or of the Persians in those of Firdausi, or of the Burgundians in the *Nibelung Lay*. But the chivalry of the Christian races of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was characterized by one

feature which is found, in so marked a degree, in only one other race—their great rivals and adversaries, the Arabians after they had received the faith of Islam. This striking feature, this powerful element, was the enthusiasm of religion. It was religious fervor, blended with the passion for war, which gave rise to the Crusades, whether against the Moslem in Spain or the Moslem in the Holy Land or the Moslem in Egypt and at Tunis; and the Crusades in turn exalted the passions which led to their inception.

From these enthusiasms sprang the inspiration to song—the popular song of the twelfth century. Human love soon came in to form an element in this popular poetry, and completed the type of the chivalric lay.

Those of the earlier type, in which love has no share, or but a slight one, are called Lays of Exploits (*Chansons de Geste*); while those of the later type are known by the general name of The Cycle of the Round Table (*Le Cycle de la Table ronde*).

The Lays of Exploits were sung by the Trouvères, as Homer's lays had been sung in the isles of Greece or in the Hellenic cities by the Rhapsodists. They were of two classes, the first drawing its subjects from traditional history of the Teutonic races, the second from the greatly transmuted facts of antiquity related by monkish historians.

The Cycle of the Round Table had its origin in Breton legends transformed by Teutonic influences.

The finest of the heroic poems cluster around the already mythical figure of the Frankish Karl. The great leaders, under whom the armies led to battle by him saved the Christian races of the West from conquest by unbelievers, very soon became mythical heroes. Roland, around whom the most romantic legends gathered, is named but once in authentic history. It is only casually that the chronicler Eginhard mentions him, as Warden of the March of Brittany, in the brief passage which

he devotes to that skirmish in which the Paladin fell.

Yet, when three centuries had passed by, it was Roland and his fatal fall at Roncevaux that formed the theme of Taillefer's battle chant as he rode forth from the Norman line at Hastings and met the Saxon van with the stirring words of defiant song ringing from his lips. The slaughter of the Frankish emperor's rear-guard in that famous pass of the Pyrenees, the treason of Ganelon, and the heroic deaths of Roland and his comrades formed the earliest subjects of epic and ballad in all the literatures of the Romance races. The Frankish epic of Roland (*Chanson de Roland*) is the noblest of those early lays.

It is a poem of more than four thousand lines in length. It covers events which transpired in the course of a few days. It shows no trace of classical influence. It differs from the Spanish ballads in that it is not lyrical, but truly epical in form and tone. Yet it is probably a growth from a number of ballads common to the folk-song of the Frankish race, welded by some artistic hand into unity. The poem may be briefly outlined thus:—

Charles sits on his golden throne, judging his host, under a pine. The paladins all around him are busy with the game of chess. As they are thus engaged, Blancandrin comes in as envoy from Marsile, sultan of the infidels, with offers of peace and treaty. Marsile promises to give hostages and to follow the emperor to his court at Aachen. Roland exhorts Charles to refuse to negotiate with miscreants who had once slain his envoys. Ganelon, Roland's stepfather, fiercely engages in the discussion, and there is soon a hot altercation between the two barons.

The emperor imposes silence, and decides to send an envoy to Marsile. Ganelon, in spite of his unwillingness, is chosen. Feeling deeply aggrieved, he begins in his heart to plot treason even while he

rides away with Blancandrin. When he reaches the camp of the enemy, he cries aloud to Marsile: "Be thou baptized, oh King: to Aachen shalt thou be taken, and there shalt thou be judged, and there shalt thou die in shame and mean estate."

At these insulting words, Marsile lays his hand on his spear. But he controls himself, and waits for Ganelon to produce Charles's letter. Marsile reads it, and the envoy, who is nowhere described as lacking in courage, sets his back against a tree and half draws his sword. Even the Saracens say of him, "A noble baron is this."

Marsile finds the letter gentler than the bearing of the envoy, speaks him fair, and offers him, in true Homeric style, a gift of sable skins. He asks Ganelon, "When will Charles the Old be weary of war?" "Never," answers Ganelon, "while his nephew Roland and the Peers are on ground."

He next advises Marsile to send tribute and hostages, and at the same time to lay an ambush in the passes of the Pyrenees. After this evil counsel, he swears to treason on the relics in the hilt of his sword, and returns to Charles, bringing with him the keys of Saragossa, as well as hostages and tribute from the sultan.

On the eve of his homeward march, Charles has an evil dream. In the vision he sees Ganelon seizing his spear in the pass of the mountains. He awakes, weeping at the omen of disaster. But the warning is without effect. He yields to the suggestion of Ganelon, that the rear-guard should be assigned to Roland, along with Evriard de Rousillon, Turpin, and Oliver. Breaking up camp, the army crosses black rocks and dark valleys, shedding tears when at last they come in sight of Gascony, "at memory of their fiefs and fields and of their little ones and gentle wives."

While the host is thus melted to tender feelings at the thought of their nearness to their homes, the rear-guard begin to note the advance of the Sara-

cens. "We shall have battle," says Oliver, as he hears the sounds of an approaching army. "God grant it," cries Roland; "never let bad ballad be sung of us."

Oliver begins to express his suspicion of Gauelon's treason. But Roland stops him. Then Oliver urges him to use his magic horn, the *Olifant* (horn of elephant's tusk), to bring Charles and the main army to their aid. But Roland refuses. "In sweet France," he cries, "I would lose my fame."

The Saracen host comes on. Bishop Turpin absolves the Christians, though leaves and grass are the only creatures of God that can serve for the sacramental elements.

Then the Franks cry, "Mount Joie," and address themselves to battle. Marsile's nephew, Aelroth, rides along the Saracen line, shouting taunts to the Christians. The two hosts rush together in fierce onset. Roland drives his lance through Aelroth's breastplate and breast. Oliver hurls down Fauseron, "lord of the land of Dathan and Abiron." Turpin slays King Corsablyx.

Fighting furiously with spear and battle-axe, the Franks for a time seem to be driving back the enemy. Siglorel, another chief of the heathen, "the enchanter whom Jupiter had led through hell," falls before the charge of the knights.

Lances are broken and cast aside. The knights draw their swords; Oliver, his bright blade *Haute-claire*; Roland, that famous brand *Durandal*. They cut their way through the dense masses of the enemy.

But the heathens are re-enforced, the Christians are now few in number. Roland thinks it time to wind his horn. But Oliver mocks him with the question: "Wilt thou not lose thy fame in sweet France? Ah, never now shalt thou lie in the arms of Alde, my sister."\*—But Turpin interposes.

\*The lady Alde, here referred to, dies at the news of Roland's death; and this is the only love-note in the poem,

"Nay, sound," says he. "We shall have burial at our friends' hands, and shall not be the spoil of wolves."

Then Roland blows till blood starts from his mouth; and the echo of that dread horn winds through the passes of the mountain and rings above the tempest of wind and the thunder and the grand moans of nature at the hero's death. Charles hears the death-blast, and knows at once that his nephew is in great need. At once he divines Ganelon's treason, and he hands him over to the cooks and camp-followers to be bound and tormented. But the worn-out remnant of the rear-guard are too hard-pressed to be saved at this late hour.

"The black folk, that have nothing white save the teeth," fall on the weary knights in vastly superior numbers. Never shall the knights see again "the land of France, that very sweet country."

Oliver is wounded to the death by the hand of the Caliph, but cuts him down at the same time. Oliver, whose eyes are dimmed by blood and the nearness of death, strikes out so blindly that he smites Roland on the crest.

"My lord companion, do you this of purpose?" asks Roland. "Not so, for I hear thee, but thee not, friend Roland, God help thee," cries Oliver.

Roland forgives the blow, and at that word they bow to each other in knightly courtesy. Roland's horse being slain, and he almost exhausted, he gathers the bodies of the peers in a circle around the dying Turpin. The bishop crosses his fair white hands, and cries that they shall all meet soon among the Holy Innocents.

Roland now speaks the praise of Oliver over that knight's dead body, and lays himself down on the green grass. He tries to break the blade of his good sword Durandal, lest it fall into the hands of the Saracens. He strikes ten blows on the hard rock, but they fail to snap the steel. Then he cries: "Ah, Durandal, how clear thou art and bright that

shinest as the sun. With thee have I conquered lands and domains for Charles of the white beard. Yea, now for thee have I sorrow and heaviness, and would die sooner than see thee in pagan hands. Holy thou art, and lovely; in thy golden hilt is store of relics. How many kingdoms have I taken with thee, wherein Charles now rules."

Then, casting down his sword and horn, he throws himself over them on the green grass under a pine. He turns his face to Spain, and many things come into his mind—sweet France, and the Barons of his house, and Charles his lord. Weeping and groaning heavily at the thought of these, he stretches out to God the glove of his right hand. Saint Gabriel takes it from his grasp. And as his spirit leaves the body, it is borne to Paradise by Saint Michael of the Sea.

The poem, however, does not end with this tragic picture. The overthrow of the Saracens and the punishment of Ganelon must be described. The sun stands still for Charles, while the Paynim host, calling on Termagaunt their god, are driven back to Saragossa.

In Saragossa Marsile, furious at defeat, beats his image of Apollo and casts the idol of Mahomet into a ditch. At the era of this poem, the Christians evidently had a very vague conception of the religion of Islam.

Next day, the final battle is fought. Charles and his Franks fight all day. "Clear is the moon and flaming are the stars," when Charles marches into Saragossa. There is no obstacle to the army's return this time. But, when the Franks come back to Aachen without Roland, Alde "of the golden hair and the bright face" falls dead at Charles's feet. The grey king, musing alone, says, "My God, how painful is my life!"

And so ends the "Geste" that Tuoldus made. It comes nearer to being a great national epic than any poem the French have ever produced since,

But, being essentially a Frankish lay, it could not wholly win the sympathies of the composite race formed by the blending of Franks with Romanized Kelts and Basques.

Yet, Homer's great epics glorified, in the Achaians, a ruling aristocratic race with much the same position in relation to other Hellenic races as that held by the Franks towards some at least of the subject races over whom they held feudal sway. Possibly, had there been no revival of ancient learning in Western Europe, the great *Chanson de Roland* might have taken somewhat the place in French literature which the *Iliad* held in that of Hellas.

This poem stands almost alone in its spirit of loyalty to the Empire. The other poems relating to Charles and his family manifest that tendency to independence on the part of the great barons which was essentially the temper of feudalism. These lays are very numerous. One of them, *Ogier de Danois*, would seem by its name to link the Frankish Emperor with the Scandinavians. But modern criticism has traced in the title *Danois* Ogier's origin from the forest of Ardeene. Hence this paladin of Charlemagne was not a Dane, but a Frank.

In this story the game of chess figures more prominently than in the Lay of Roland, for the hostility of Ogier to the Emperor is caused by the killing of his son Caudouin (Baldwin) at a game with the son of Charlemagne who, enraged at being beaten, dashes the heavy chess-board of gold and ivory at his adversary's head. Escaping to Pavia, the offended vassal performs wonderful acts of prowess in the war that ensues between Charles and Didier, King of the Lombards, in whose service he fights his former master.

Later, he is once more in the service of Charles, now in sore need of his stalwart arm. The Emperor has been even forced to yield his son to Oierg's vengeance, which, checked by heavenly in-



terference, has taken the mild form of a furious blow with the fist which has rolled the murderer in the dust. Broiefort, the hero's old charger, is brought forward from among the pack-animals of a convent, rejuvenated at sight of his master and the apparel of war, and soon returns from the field with Ogier on his back, victorious over the Saracens.

Turolld is the name assigned to the author of the Lay of Roland, while Raimbert of Haris is accredited with the authorship of the Lay of Ogier. Turolld is placed by scholars in the eleventh century, and Raimbert in the twelfth.

But there are poems of fire and invention, which must have been written in the interval between these lays of Turolld and Raimbert. These *Chansons de Geste* are The Crowning of Louis (*Le Couronnement de Louis*), The Wagon of Nîmes (*Le Charrois de Nîmes*), The Capture of Orange (*La Prise d'Orange*), The Vow of Nivien (*Le Vœu de Vivien*), and the Battle of Aleschans (*Le Bataille d'Aleschans*).

These poems all relate to the same hero, Guillaume of the Short Nose, or, as he is also called, of the Iron Arm; and their scenes are laid in the time of Louis the Easy-Natured, son of Charlemagne. Aleschans is *Ælisei Campi*, the cemetery of Arles.

Among other famous lays are the Lay of the Lorraines (*Chanson des Lorrains*), by Jean of Flagy; *Raoul de Cambrai*, the author of which is unknown; and the Four Sons of Aymon (*Quatre Fils Aymon*), by Huon of Villeneuve.

We now reach lays that treat of real events. The Lay of Antioch (*Chansom d'Antioche*) is one of these. It was composed by Richard the Pilgrim at the time of the taking of Jerusalem by the crusaders, and at the end of the twelfth century was rewritten by Graindor of Douai. It is regarded as more faithful history than the Latin chronicles of

the same events by such writers as William of Tyre.

About the same time, the Romance of Alexander (*Roman d'Alexandre*) was produced by Lambert the Short, of Châteaudun, and Alexander of Bernai. This lay differed from the earlier lays in two respects: it went to antiquity for its subject, and it was peculiar in the structure of its verse.

The elder chanson had employed a loose verse of ten or eleven syllables, with a strong time-beat about the middle of each line. This romaunt employed, with great regularity, the verse of twelve syllables, with the strong time-beat exactly in the middle, so that each run of sounds up to the breathing comprised invariably six syllables, or at any rate three distinct time-beats. It was the use of this measure in the Lay of Alexander, which gave rise to the name *Alexandrine*.

The basis alone of this poem is antique, the coloring is of the age in which it was produced. The manners and the spirit of the age of chivalry are infused into it throughout. The real Alexander would have recognized neither himself nor his surroundings.

The lays about Arthur and the Round Table Knights are based on legends the Bretons brought from their island home six centuries before. Wace, the Anglo-Norman, worked them into his Romance of Brute (*Roman de Brut*). But the Trouvère, Chrestien of Troyes, first gave them really poetic form. His *Tristan* was written in a verse of eight syllables with alternating rhymes. Aimé of Varennes used the same verse in his *Florimont*.

The taste for marvels and for amorous incidents passed from the lays of the Bretons to those of the Franks. Thus we find the sorceries of Maugis playing a great part in the Four Sons of Aymon; and the gallantries of Witikind's queen, in Jean Borel's Lay of the Saxons.

The romance of *Parthénope* shares this new spirit. The hero, Parthénope of Blois, valiant and lovable, reverses the old myth of Cupid and Psyche: By the light of a lamp he indiscreetly views his unknown mistress, the fairy Mélior, Empress of Constantinople; and loses her by his fatal curiosity. But deep repentance, deeds of prowess, and constant devotion win her back to him; and he ends by reigning openly in that palace into which he had once secretly penetrated. Singularly enough, nearly about the time of the production of this lay, a French-speaking prince, Baldwin, Count of Flanders and Hainault, did mount the throne of Constantinople, as the first Latin Emperor of the Byzantine empire. Among other highly imaginative romances of this kind may be named *Flore et Blanche-Fleur*, *Violette*, and the *Chastelain de Coucy*.

A work of far greater interest than any fairy tale in verse was the outcome of the historic incidents just mentioned in connection with the lay of *Parthénope*. This was the first of the Chronicles, the earliest work in French prose.

Induced by the Venetians to help them take Zara, the leaders of the fourth Crusade had been prayed while there by young Alexis, son of Isaac II., Emperor of Constantinople, to aid him against his usurping uncle by whom his father had been deposed and blinded. The Crusaders agreed, restored the rightful Emperor, and then failing to get the reward promised by Alexis, returned to Constantinople, seized and sacked the city, and made Baldwin Emperor.

This striking and dramatic series of events was witnessed and afterwards related by Geoffroy de Villehardouin (1150-1213) in his *Conquête de Constantinople*. This is a work of high merit. A military leader, a man of the world, a negotiator of treaties, he was qualified to record events of which he knew the hidden springs, and of which he had

seen the stirring and picturesque scenes enacted before him.

His account is in keeping with these qualifications. He writes simply, soberly, with force, stating briefly what is of importance and leaving out all that is irrelevant. Not a few single passages, isolated from their context, stand out as complete pictures. Such, for instance, is the account of the negotiations of the Crusaders at Venice to procure transports and to secure the concurrence of the republic. Such is that which describes the emotion of the Crusaders at the sight of Constantinople, so beautiful and grand a city as it seemed to those simple Western warriors, and so capable of defence. Such is the scene of the re-instatement of the blind Emperor, where the blind old warrior Doge Dandolo also figures, a scene vividly described from our old chronicler by the younger Bulwer-Lytton in English verse.

So far, we have had before us the serious side of the age of chivalry. There was also a humorous side, in which fables played their part, and in which the true folk-lore multiplied its satirical fancies.

Before, however, we turn aside from the Lays, let me mention one charming work of the Trouvères, which seems to have been born of the delight felt by its author in the beautiful valleys of Provence, where he lays the scene of his story. This work is *Aucassin et Nicolette*, an idyllic song-story, the story being told in prose, with songs interspersed through it. Competent scholars regard it as a work of the twelfth century, though the Trouvère who wrote it has caught from his sojourn in the land of the Albigenses a tone of satire in regard to priests and things clerical that was characteristic of a later age among his countrymen. Alexandre Bida, philologist and artist, has put it into modern French and daintily illustrated it; and we have it in English under the title, "The Lovers

of Provence." It is a fragrant little flower of romance handed down to us through the centuries as fresh as when it first bloomed in that wild time.

I shall close this chapter with brief mention of some of the *Chansons de Geste* not yet referred to. Among these are *Berthe aux grands pieds* by Adenès le Roi, embodying legends of Charles the Great's mother; *Jean de Lanson*, *Huon de Bordeaux*, *Acquin*, *Aspremont*, *Fierabras*, *Otinél*, *Guy de Bourgogne*, *Prise de Pampelune*, *Macaire*, *Doon de Mayence*, *Guy de Nanteuil*, all relating the exploits of Charles and his Paladins.

## IV.

## THE FABLIAUX AND THE CHRONICLES.

STUDENTS of folk-lore have shown that the "beast-fable" is a common inheritance of the Aryan races; and it has been ascertained that it has nowhere reached so high a degree of poetical development as among the Franks. They handed down this taste to both the German and the French branches of their race.

It is worthy of notice, in passing, that a remarkably similar series of fables has existed among the descendents of the Africans brought to this country as slaves, from the time of their importation to the present day. The children of our country are now familiar with many of them through the publication of Harris's *Uncle Remus*; but they have for generations been the delight of the young people brought up on our Southern plantations, to whom they were related by the old "maumers" in that rich dialect which so admirably brought out their native numor.

*Reynard the Fox* is the chief of these stories, as they existed among the Franks; and it seems to have first appeared, in the Latin tongue, in the Netherlands. These Latin poems belong to the tenth and eleventh centuries. About the beginning of the twelfth century appeared *Isengrîmus*, of which the wolf is the hero; and, a little later, *Reinardus*, relating the rogueries of the fox. Both of these works were by Flemish ecclesiastics. A little later still, the fable passed over into German literature.

In French literature, it can be traced back only to the beginning of the thirteenth century. But it

soon became immensely popular, and great numbers of poems were devoted to the adventures of Reynard.

Through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it formed a favorite vehicle for satire both in France and Germany. The general plan of all these animal-epics is the same. Noble the Lion is emperor or king, with his court, palace, and all the insignia of royalty. Reynard the Fox is a crafty baron dwelling in a castle called Malpertuis. Isengrin the Wolf is his uncle—an uncle upon whom he plays off malicious tricks, just as in the comedies scampish nephews were wont to do. Their wives too bear names. The spouse of Reynard is Emmeline, that of Isengrin is Hersent. Church and State are both satirized in these poems, sometimes merrily, sometimes bitterly; and they are valuable for the light they cast on the social condition of the people in the middle ages. They are mostly written in verses of eight syllables, with rhyming couplets.

These "beast-fables" belong to the general class called *Fabliaux*. This term comprehends a great variety of short metrical tales, intended for recitation. They were often of the nature of mock-heroics, but were sometimes serious. One of the merry ones, the *Vilain Mire*, furnished Molière with the plot of his *Médecin malgré lui*. Others, also ingenious and witty, are *Saint Pierre et le Jongleur*, the *Trois Bossus*, and the *Vair Palefroi*.

The story of this last runs thus:—A young knight, courteous, brave, and of fine person, lacking money but possessing an excellent horse or palfrey, has for neighbor an old lord, father of a daughter of great beauty. The two young people have seen and loved each other. The lover in vain asks for the hand of the lady. The father is polite, but intimates that the aspirant's estate is too slender. The lady counsels her lover to apply to an old uncle of his, to whom he is sole heir, for aid in satis-

fiying the father. The uncle promises, but woos for himself, and is accepted by the father. The young lover, returning from a tournament, learns the treason only through the request made for his beautiful palfrey, to be used in the procession which is to conduct the bride to the chapel. He sends him, in spite of his grief and anger. Now, the palfrey was wanted for the bride's especial use. During the ride, which takes place before day-dawn, the palfrey turns down a familiar path in the forest, and gallops home before he is missed from the cavalcade. A chaplain is at hand, and the lovers are united before the two old men find their way to the manor-house of the young knight. The author of this graceful little *fabliau* is Huon le Roy.

Other abler composers of *fabliaux* and *contes* were Jean de Boves, Henri Piauclle, and Rutebeuf. The taste spread to other lands; and these metrical tales appeared, sometimes in the form of prose, sometimes in that of verse, in the works of master-spirits. Boccaccio in his *Decameron*, and Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales*, drew largely from these old *fabliaux*.

There were also legends of miracles, performed by the saints and especially by the Virgin. One of these, by Gautier de Coinsy, Prior of Vic-sur-Aisme, relates how the Virgin contended and conquered in a tourney under the form of a knight who had been so deeply engaged in performing his orisons in one of her chapels as to let the hour of combat pass by unobserved.

During this period, when both the epic lay and the mock-epic *fabliau* were so enthusiastically cultivated, many circumstances concurred to extend and ennoble the French language. The Normans had carried it, a few generations before, to Sicily, Southern Italy, and England. The Crusaders, with leaders like Godfrey of Buillon, Robert of Normandy, the Sicilian Normans, Bohemond and Tan-



cred, Hugh of Vermandois, Louis Phillippe Auguste of France, Richard of England, Baldwin of Flanders, and other French-speaking captains, had carried it in successive generations to the shores of the Levant and to Jerusalem itself.

In the East all the nations of the West came to be known for centuries by the comprehensive term of Franks, and the mixed jargon in which all negotiations were conducted between Christians and Moslems was called *Lingua Franca*.

While Louis IX.—Saint Louis—was conducting his disastrous crusades, was protecting the mendicant orders, was trying in every way to bring back the spirit of his age to the ardors and the simple faith of the earlier crusading times, the great love-allegory of the Middle Ages was produced.

Guillaume of Lorris takes a vast host of abstract qualities, quickens them into life in forms like those of the characters that Bunyan in a later age peopled his *Pilgrim's Progress* with, and creates the famous *Roman de la Rose*, the great Book of Love for the centuries just before the *Renaissance*, as Ovid's *Art of Love* had been for former generations. The work of Guillaume of Lorris was left unfinished, and, forty years later, was continued in a very different tone by Jean of Meung.

But, before we note the differences which the last part of the *Roman de la Rose*, when compared with the first, shows between the spirit, temper, and motive of Jean of Meung and those of his predecessor, it will be necessary to mention a remarkable prose work. This is the chronicle of the Sire de Joinville (1222–1318), who accompanied Saint Louis in the first of his expeditions, knew him thoroughly, and loved him as man and as master. He relates the exploits of his king, recites his conversations and opinions, opens to us fully that singularly enthusiastic nature—crowned monk and yet valiant knight. He does not concur in all the views of his master, much as he admires him; and,

when Louis sets out on his second crusade, the good seneschal thinks that his five wounds received at Massora, his captivity of several months, all that he has suffered of hunger, thirst, fever, and the plague, will honorably excuse him from the new enterprise.

This chronicle of de Joinville has great merit as a picture of the times and as a lifelike portraiture of one of the most singular characters in history. There are in it, also, vivid descriptions by an eyewitness of most dramatic historical scenes.

We hardly leave the period of the Crusades, when we find France greatly changed. Thought had been enlarged by freer intercourse with Rome, by contact with the splendid though effete civilization of the Byzantine Empire, by a nearer acquaintance with the then brilliant civilization of the Saracens, by the return of travellers from the magnificent empire of the Mogul Khans. The political and social situation had undergone a change at home. The number of petty fiefs had been greatly diminished by their sale or merger for the equipment of the barons who had gone on the Crusades. The great lords became greater than ever, and held larger courts. The towns had increased their wealth and gained greater municipal privileges.

The historian of *Civilization in Europe*, Guizot, sums up the results of the Crusades in these words:—"On the one hand, the extension of ideas and the emancipation of thought; on the other, a general enlargement of the social sphere, and the opening of a wider field for every sort of activity: they produced, at the same time, more individual freedom and more political unity. They tended to the independence of man and the centralization of society."

It was amid this new order of society that Jean of Meung finished the poem left incomplete by Guillaume of Lorris, *Le Roman de la Rose*. He did so at the invitation of his king, Philip the

Fair, that prince of cunning policy. The whole spirit of the poem was changed in the continuation. From a dreamy and metaphysical allegory of love and the ladies, it became a vast political satire and a social diatribe as well. The bitter poet scourges avarice, idleness and hypocrisy, having an especial grudge against those pests of the age, the mendicant monks, "tramps" in the name of religion.

The same spirit of hostility to the abuses of the Church, clothed in the same form of allegory, in which all the personages and places are virtues and vices, is exhibited in a renovation of the "beast-fable" by Jacquemart Gelée. This *fabliau* is entitled *Renart le Nouvel*.

Another poet, contemporary with these, François of Rues, attacks the Pope and the order of the Templars, making Fauvel the Mare the type of luxury and ambition, as Gelée had made Reynard the Fox the type of bad faith.

At this time, when poetry in France had degenerated into violent satire, disfigured by the uncouth forms of abstract qualities in masquerade, Italy was moving steadily toward a brighter light of learning than the old dark lantern of scholasticism could furnish. A taste had sprung up for the study of the older Latin literature. The Civil Law of the Roman empire, too, had been eagerly studied from the time of the twelfth century. That great Florentine poet, Dante Alighieri, had produced his *Divina Commedia*. There was an awakening beyond the Alps, which was to bear fruit later all over Europe.

But France was destined to pass through the throes of a great agony, before she could find leisure to profit by the new quickening of the human mind. She had now to meet the trials of the Hundred Years' War. These long wars filled up the last half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries. We have nothing to do here with those shining names, Crécy, Poitiers, Azin-

court; with the gallant knights, Edward the Black Prince, Sir Walter de Manny, Gaston de Foix, Bertrand du Guesclin; or with that figure, the brightest and purest, surely, in all history, Jeanne Darc, the Maid of Orleans. Our business is with what came after; for this time of convulsion was of necessity sterile in literary effort, except for two witnesses of phases of the struggle and to some extent partakers in it, Jean Froissart the chronicler, and Eustache Deschamps the poet.

Froissart, the son of a painter of escutcheons, was born at Valenciennes in 1337. He was destined for the Church, and so received a better education than the knights and princes with whom he afterwards lived so much. His passion for poetry, for courtly society, for knightly deeds, took him to other lands, after inciting him to relate such events of the wars of his time as he could find material for. On finishing the first part of his Chronicles, which he began when only twenty years of age, he went to the brilliant court of Edward III. of England, where he became a great favorite with the Queen, Philippa of Hainault, who made him her secretary. He also visited Scotland, as the guest of King David Bruce. In 1366, he went with the Black Prince to Bordeaux. Later, he accompanied the Duke of Clarence to Italy; and, there, it is believed that he had Chaucer and Petrarca for fellow-guests at the marriage of the duke with the daughter of Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan. On Philippa's death, Froissart left England. He was afterwards private secretary to the Duke of Brabant, on whose death he entered the service of Guy, Count of Blois, and, continuing his Chronicles, made a journey to the court of Gaston Phœbus, Count de Foix, to hear from the Béarnese and Gascon knights the tales of their feats during the great wars. He made other journeys, especially a visit to the English court of Richard II., where he was nobly welcomed. He died in 1410 at Chimay,

where he held a canonry. He was certainly a born narrator, and cannot be surpassed for ease, unaffected simplicity, warmth and variety of coloring.

"In certain narratives of battle," says Villemain, "Froissart is truly Homeric. One could not describe with greater force the shock of those masses of mail-clad men that dash together. Arrived in the castle of Gaston de Foix, you see there in life-like colors the life of leisure, the dainty delights, the festivals: they could not be painted with more grace. Pass with the Chronicler into Spain: the boldness of Henry of Transtamare, the genius of the Black Prince are before you. Come back with him to France: the wisdom of Charles V., his activity, his able and restorative administration, are described with a care and a seriousness which seem for a time to set aside the natural gaiety of Froissart. Great events, familiar anecdotes, characteristics of different nations, English, Flemings, French—all are mingled and succeed one another without confusion; and never are the colors of the historian alike, though he is always unaffected, natural, full of his subject."

His Chronicles were, in the next age, continued by Monstrelet, but in very inferior style.

As to the part taken by Froissart, one in these days is apt to imagine, simply because he spoke and wrote in French, that he was unpatriotic in showing more decided sympathy in the great struggle with the kings and nobles of England than with those of France. But, it must be remembered, that those kings were of the house of Anjou, spoke French, and laid claim to the throne of France, having in their veins fully as much of the French blood-royal as any prince of the house of Valois; that those barons of England were of Norman and Aquitanian descent; that the English queen, who protected and rewarded Froissart, was like himself a Fleming, as Hainault was then subject to Flanders; and that the Angevin princes ruled by just right of inheritance many fair lands in which French

was the native tongue, and were followed to battle by many French knights. The struggle was at first a struggle of dynasties, and not of nationalities. It was not till the time of Henry V. that it could be called a conflict between England and France.

But Froissart was to the men of his own day something more than a chronicler. He was also a poet, and a voluminous one. He tells the story of his youthful love, which was a devotion after the manner of the Provençal poets, in a lay of some four thousand lines, interspersed with ballades, virelays, and rondeaux. The poem is styled *Trettie de l'Espinette Amoureuse*, and is full of all manner of prettinesses. But unreal as it all is, there is in it the noble ideal of faith in honor, virtue, loyalty—the belief in love as the great elevator and purifier. So, in the great chronicler, we find also one of the last of the Trouvères, or even of the Troubadours, for both theme and treatment are more in their mood than in that of the poets of the North.

There was another poet of this age, who has come down to us with that title, and whose mission it was to sing of those events which Froissart chronicled. This was Eustache Deschamps, soldier and magistrate, and hater of the English. His verse has many tones, serious, lofty, tender, satirical. It has also the varying forms of ballade, rondeau, lay.

It was in this age, too, when war was desolating the land and was aided in its dread task by the plague called the Black Death and by the frightful atrocities of that rising of the peasants called the Jacquerie, that as a singular contrast the table-song and the vaudeville came first into being. Olivier Basselin improvised such songs for the Norman wine-bibbers two centuries before they appeared in print, modernized somewhat in language, but with the same thoughts and the same rhythm. There is a fine lyrical swing about them, which has given them vitality, and has caused their rhythm to be reproduced in many a modern chant. This old

singir of drinking-songs, Olivier Basselin, was not only the father of the modern vaudeville, but that species of composition actually takes its name from him—that is, from the name of the region where he composed his songs, the Valley of the Vire, for the vaudeville was originally called *Vau-de-Vire*.

Under Charles V. of France, who encouraged the study of the classics, there were three authors deserving at least brief mention. These were Christine de Pisan, one of the most learned women of her age; Jean Gerson, the ecclesiastic once believed to have been the true Thomas à Kempis; and Alain Chartier, poet and patriot.

Christine wrote the life of Charles V., under the title, *Livre des faits et bonnes mœurs du roi Charles V.* Gerson, besides a vast number of Latin works which he composed in his numerous controversies, wrote in French some strong remonstrances to King Charles in behalf of the University, of which he was Chancellor. Alain Chartier, a short time after the fatal battle of Agincourt, wrote his *Livre des quatre Dames*, a poem in which he takes occasion to reproach those who fled from that lost field. His most striking work is his *Quadrilogie invectif*, a patriotic manifesto, put forth between the defeat at Agincourt and the deliverance of Orléans by the Maiden. It is a noble appeal, full of hope and encouragement. It was Jeanne Darc who answered it in the name of France and of the God, who, as she firmly believed, sent her to lead the armies of France; and, though she perished herself, she saved her beloved France.

The old lays of exploits had now passed away with the decay of chivalry. The latest of them were two poems, one of them reciting the adventures of a purely imaginary hero, Baldwin of Sébourg, whom the Trouvère invents as a scion of the house of the Counts of Flanders; the other, written by Cuvelier, a short time after the death of

Du Guesclin, and narrating the history of that Breton hero.

A little later, we find the heroic lays transformed into prose romances, and the *fabliaux* into prose novels. Among these latter was the famous collection, called the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*, some tales of which—and these among the most licentious—are ascribed to the Dauphin, who afterwards mounted the throne as Louis XI.

But the most remarkable literary productions, perhaps, of this age were the fiery sermons of the popular preachers, Olivier Maillard and Michel Ménot, both of them Franciscan friars. They used familiar comparisons, popular proverbs, piquant allusions to passing events, biting personalities, satirical anecdotes and fables; apostrophized with withering irony and startling vehemence great Church dignitaries; attacked the great lords and ladies; and even rebuked the king.

Besides this dramatic preaching, stirring the people to repentance—Wickliffe in England and Huss in Bohemia had just preceded Ménot and Maillard, and Savonarola in Italy was their contemporary—the Church was authorizing at this time the performance of those Mystery and Miracle plays, of which in our times the Ober-Ammergau Passion-play is a solitary survival.

A celebrated fraternity, called the *Confrérie de la Passion*, founded in Paris in 1350, had the monopoly for the performance of these. They were very long and occupied, each of them, several days. The most celebrated of them, the Mystery of the Passion, contains more than sixty thousand verses, and its representation took up several weeks. The brothers Grébau and Jean Michel of Angers were the most notable composers of these religious dramas.

Serious at first, these performances after a time degenerated; and farce and ribaldry were mingled with them, until by the middle of the sixteenth



century they fell into great disrepute. They were at last prohibited, as a public scandal, by the Parliament of Paris in 1548.

Meanwhile, however, that taste for allegory, which had shown itself so prodigally in the *Romance of the Rose*, also ventured upon the stage, and the entertainment given by the Mystery Plays was sometimes varied by the performance of Morality Plays, in which the virtues and vices took the place of the Biblical characters.

The *fabliaux* also invaded the stage, being there transformed into farces, very licentious for the most part. Some that were comparatively free from such grossnesses as disfigured the majority, were still immoral in their tone, as setting forth the triumph of roguery. They are, however, amusing; and the most famous of them, Maitre Pathelin, is really a masterpiece of its kind.

Besides this purely popular literature, we find on the eve of the *Renaissance* three writers of greater literary pretensions, one of them, however, as popular as the preachers and the composers of Mystery Plays. François Villon is the immediate successor of the author of *Pathelin*. Charles d'Orléans is the representative of the old poetry of chivalry. Phillippe de Commes is the real successor of Froissart, whose spirit Monstrelet could not reproduce.

Charles d'Orléans, the near kinsmen of Louis XI., and himself the father of a king, though cruelly used by that wily and wicked prince who is so vividly painted for us in the *Quentin Durward* of Sir Walter Scott, is an isolated flower of tender and exalted sentiment. He does not belong to his age, but to the elder times, and he is in his nature almost a twin-brother of that good King René, the last of the independent Dukes of Anjou and the last of the Provençal poets, whom Scott describes for us in his *Anne of Geierstein*. Indeed, these princes resemble each other, not only in their passion for poetry and for the chivalry of olden time,

but also in their unfitness to cope with the powerful and unscrupulous princes of the age. They would both have made excellent troubadours; but the times were not willing to listen to troubadours.

In exile and in prison, as well as in his castle of Blois, Charles poured forth gay rondeaux, dainty little ballades, charming triplets. The sweet season of spring reigns over all his poetry, and he never seems to grow old. Retiring to his castle of Blois, after his return from captivity, he founded there a little court of the Muses, and gathered around him poets and wits who took part in poetical tourneys. Here the last of the troubadours entertains the first of the Bohemians, for Villon, whose real name was François Corbueil, fresh from a prison, came to one of these tourneys, and carried off the palm of victory.

Villon, though a thorough scamp, fit to be the pet of Louis XI., along with his hangman and his barber, was after all a true poet, energetic, sincere, and endowed with lively imagination, sensibility, and wit. Narrowly missing the gallows, his most touching verses are those in which he treats of death, the fatal eclipse of all the beauty and the grandeur that song and story proclaim as brightening the ages that have gone by. His poems have been ably translated by John Payne.

De Comines, the last of the chroniclers and at the same time the first of the historians, was also befriended by Louis XI., to whom he voluntarily attached himself, though at first in the service of Charles the Bold, of Burgundy, Louis's great rival. In his *Mémoires*, besides describing with subtle discrimination and narrating events with admirable lucidity, he seeks to ascertain causes and effects with a political sagacity till then unknown among the writers of the Middle Ages. He has, too, the valuable quality of the impartial witness. Moderation and good sense characterize him throughout, and they are rare gifts in one who writes the

history of his own times. Guizot says of Philippe de Comines: "As a king's adviser, he would have been as much in place at the side of Louis XIV. as at that of Louis XI.; as a writer, he, in the fifteenth century, often made history and politics speak a language which the seventeenth century would not have disowned."

## V.

## THE RENAISSANCE.

WE have reached the *Renaissance*—the period of the re-birth of the human mind after the torpor, which was like death, that the unfruitful philosophy of scholasticism had imposed upon it. The human mind was astir once more. What were the causes of this new life?

I think they were nearly all traceable to the fall of Constantinople in 1453, viewed by Christian Europe, at the time and for ages after, as the greatest of disasters. It is true, that what the Europeans had learned from the East during the crusading centuries had developed changes of great importance which prepared the soil, as it were, for those seeds which were to be sowed by the coming of the Turks into Europe. The Crusades had brought the Western Europeans into contact with two civilizations more advanced than their own, the Byzantine and the Saracenic. Their minds had been greatly enlightened and liberalized. A public social opinion had been generated by the mingling of the different nations in the prosecution of a common cause. Commerce had been developed on a larger scale than ever before. Gunpowder had come into use, and was gradually changing the methods of warfare and diminishing the importance of mail-clad cavalry. Printing had been invented just before the fall of Constantinople, and was ready to disseminate the new learning widely—almost, it may be said, at the very moment when it began to be eagerly sought by the newly awakened minds of men. The arts that minister to the taste for the beautiful had also begun to be culti-

vated with new zeal in Italy, fostered by the peculiar circumstances of those little city-commonwealths that had sprung up there. Painting in oil was invented, and great masterpieces were produced. Engraving on copper was invented, and multiplied copies of these great works. The mariner's compass was invented, and gave new possibilities to commerce.

Then came the fall of Constantinople, which furnished new opportunities for utilizing these discoveries. Cutting off the merchant ships of Venice and Genoa from the Levant, it forced them to seek the East by a new route. This gave rise to the Portuguese navigation of the seas around Africa and their finding a new passage to India. It gave rise to the discovery of the Antilles and then of the great American continent by the faith and enterprise of that noble Genoese seaman, Columbus, in ships of Spain.

The downfall of the Byzantine Empire also drove great numbers of fugitive Greeks into Italy, and among them scholars, who brought with them valuable manuscripts and the ability to reveal their contents to the eager scholars of the West. Learning took a wider range and a loftier tone. The Western mind awoke. Thought and action were both possible on a larger scale than heretofore. The material for both was immensely increased. The old struggle against the abuses which had sprung up in the Church was renewed, and, this time, with success in the northern parts of Europe. That movement, called the Reform, which had been crushed successively in the case of the Albigenses, of the followers of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, and of the Lollard followers of Wickliffe, reached maturity now under the leadership of Luther, of Zwingli, of Calvin, of Knox. It had its influence in France, but it failed to win over the nation, and it did not seriously affect the literature.

Among those who listened willingly to the doc-

trines of the Reformers was the poet, Clément Marot, the son of Jean Marot, himself a poet of some note, and favored by both Louis XII. and François I.

Marot's joyous nature was in perpetual contrast with his life, for that was one continued struggle against the machinations of his enemies. It was in vain that he was befriended by Marguerite de Valois, the king's sister, and by some of the foremost scholars of the age, among them the bold Rabelais. The hatred of Diane de Poitiers and of the inquisitor of the Sorbonne, Jean Bouchard, was too bitter to be stayed even by the favor of the king. The poor poet had to suffer imprisonment, exile, and misery everywhere save in the heart.

Marot was a true poet of the *Renaissance*. He attempted many kinds of poetry, and in some styles he has never been surpassed. His epigrams, his rondeaux, his madrigals, his light and mirthful epistles, have all the grace, the wit and the charm that such compositions should sparkle with. But he fails when he attempts a loftier strain. Could we fancy the throbbing jewel that flits from flower to flower in our gardens endowed with the joyous matin song of the mocking-bird, such a creature of quick beauty and thrilling rapture would be a fit emblem of the singer Marot. But he does not soar on eagle wing straight in the eye of the sun.

His little gems are numerous. There are the ballade of *Frère Lubin*, the rondeaux of the *Bon vieux temps*, the madrigals on *La Méprise de l'amour* and on *Le Passereau*, the epigrams of *Lieutenant Maillart*, *L'Abbé et son valet*, and *Le gros prieur*, and his epistle to King Francis after having been robbed by his valet. In these he has much the spirit of Catullus, and indeed in many of his lighter pieces he directly imitates that charming poet. He has merit, too, in his satires, apologues, and elegies. His hymns, like the devotional work of Queen Marguerite, *Miroir de l'âme*

*Pécheresse*, as compared with her *Heptameron des Nouvelles*, lacked the fire and rhythmic ease of his profane productions.

Another Huguenot, and a most steadfast one, was Bernard Palissy, the famous artist in pottery. The story of his lifelong devotion to his art, of his persevering experiments and final brilliant success, of his favor with the king and his special exemption from the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day because such a man could not be replaced, and of his brave defiance in prison of every temptation to abjure his faith, is a story very generally known. But it is not so well known, that the memoirs he wrote not only indicate a true method in the study of physical science, but are regarded by critics as admirable from a literary point of view.

François Rabelais, Marot's friend, with a richer vein of satire had greater skill in veiling his real opinions, and succeeded in escaping persecution. Indeed, it was not easy to persecute one who had made all the world laugh. The filth with which he riotously, and seemingly with hearty enjoyment, covers up the hands that point so jeeringly at the follies and disgraces of his time, is apt to disgust us of this nicer age so completely that we fail to note his unerring vision as he marks the proper objects of scorn and pitiless ridicule. We should remember that but for that lavish license in the nastiness that delighted those whom he satirized, he would most likely have gone to the stake, or, at all events, into exile. In truth, he had not the martyr-spirit any more than had Erasmus; and, yet, like Erasmus, he seems to have ardently desired to laugh the lazy monks out of their too comfortable nooks. Setting aside the sullied garment that clothes his thought, we find the meaning of the great Pantagruelist sincere and serious; and sometimes even his mirth, so often stained, is clean as well as hearty. His satire, like that of Swift in his *Gulliver*, is a universal one. From

the king and court, the magistracy, the clergy, the cloisters, to the lower functionaries and the populace, his satire embraces all. Learning, wit, and true social and political wisdom shine under all that mass of filth, with which the long allegory of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* is daubed. There are diamonds in the dungheap, if one can bear to turn it over for them. Good sense on the subject of education, a large conception of the benefits attendant on the new learning, a creed of charity and liberality of spirit far in advance of the age, are some of the excellent things to be found in the midst of sarcasms and drolleries. In many ways he seems a forefather of Voltaire, in his faults and in his virtues. But, though coarser, he is merrier and less sardonic than the philosopher of Ferney. His great misfortune was that he never seems to have known a woman.

A notable contrast in temper, style, and matter to the writings of Rabelais were the controversial pamphlets and the great theological treatise, *Institution chrétienne*, of Calvin, the French Reformer who became the Genevese legislator. His prose is ranked very high for firm, clear, virile energy by French critics who dissent from his creed and abhor his spirit.

The taste of King François for the romances of chivalry was reflected by a writer, who, according to Philarète Chasles, exerted no mean influence on the development of French prose. This was Herberay des Essarts, who translated from the Spanish that famous *Amadis de Gaule*, of which Don Quixote was so fond, and which the French king pored over in his prison at Madrid.

To these, the poet, the experimenter, the satirist, the theologian, and the translator, must be added the Queen of Navarre; her *valet de chambre*, Bonaventure des Perriers, author of the *Joyeux Devis* and of the *Cymbalum mundi*; Calvin's friend and follower, Théodore de Bèze; Marot's imitator, Bro-



deau; and the epigrammatist, Mellin de Saint-Gelais.

Marguerite I have already alluded to. She was daughter to Charles of Orléans, Comte d'Angoulême, and was in her youth known as Marguerite d'Angoulême. She was versed in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, as well as in Spanish and Italian, and was of brilliant mind. Married first to Charles, Duc d'Alençon, she was, on his death, given in marriage to Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, becoming thus the mother of Jeanne d'Albret and the grandmother of Henri IV. She was a loving sister, and had gone to Madrid, when her brother was a prisoner there, to nurse him in his sickness. As Queen of Navarre, she did what she could to foil the persecuting rage of the monks, though the threats against her own life induced her to conform outwardly to the practices of the church of Rome. She was born in the year in which Columbus discovered America, and died in the year in which Du Bellay published his *Illustration de la Langue française*. This period, from 1492 to 1549, covered by her life, may well be regarded as the first period of the *Renaissance*.

Du Bellay's work marks the beginning of a period in which the influence of the old classics dominated with really tyrannical sway, culminating in the artificialities of Ronsard. Du Bellay, filled with a high enthusiasm for the sinewy strength and polished grace of the best writers of antiquity, strove to open the eyes of his contemporaries to the weaknesses of their earlier writers, and to animate them to an earnest effort towards the attainment of true excellence. His treatise was eloquent; and, had Ronsard, Baïf, Belleau, and the other young pupils of the learned Jean Daurat, carried out his counsels with judgment, the *Renaissance* might have produced far more valuable fruit. Du Bellay's own work was healthy, and in no degree over-strained. He was called the French Ovid; and, had he lived longer—for he died at thirty-six—he would perhaps

have deserved such praise. His poetry is delicate, tender, and full of sensibility. In one of his sonnets, he breathes sweetly that love of the natal place, which calls forth the sympathy of all who, like him, are forced to pass a large part of life far from the home of their childhood. Singing his plaint in Rome, whither his kinsman, the Cardinal du Bellay, had taken him, he declares that his own Loire pleases him more than the Latin Tiber; his little Angevin village, Liré, more than Mount Palatine. There is also, among his poems, a light and graceful little villanelle, addressed to the breezes, and put into the mouth of a winnower of wheat, which has been often quoted as a model of grace.

Pierre de Ronsard, who was in far greater estimation in his own day than Joachim du Bellay, sinned by the exaggeration of that spirit of imitation which the study of antiquity induced. For a half-century he had the reputation of combining in his own person the excellences of Homer and Virgil, of Pindar and Horace. Montaigne admired him; Tasso did him honor; those bitter enemies, Elizabeth of England and Mary Stuart, agreed in bowing down before the glory of the great French poet. Indeed, connected with the court at an early age on account of the favor which his beauty and accomplishments won for him, he had lived at both the Scottish and the English courts, as well as the French, before these princesses were born. It was deafness that led him to renounce the career of arms for that of letters. Going to the Collège de Coqueret, he studied hard there for five years. There, with his fellow-student, Du Bellay, and others of like mind, he planned to reform his native language and invest it with the dignity and grace of the classics. Du Bellay, as has been seen, struck the first blow; but it was Ronsard who most boldly broke with the past, and most resolutely set to work to polish the old materials for a new style of literary architecture, inserting freely stones of classic carving, in the be-

lief that they must be more ornamental than what they displaced. The year after Du Bellay's manifesto, appeared Ronsard's Amours and Quatre Livres d' Odes.

The advocates of the new school hailed these poems with delight. The court declared itself on his side. Pensions and honors were showered upon him. Rabelais raised almost the only strong voice on the other side. Ronsard was carried away by the applause lavished on him. Twenty days after the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day—which he approved, for he was a bitter partisan—he published his unfinished epic, La Franciade, a very poor imitation of the Æneid. He finished only four books out of the intended twenty-four; but for these he was extolled to the skies. Charles IX. gave him the abbey of Croix-val and Bellozane and the priories of Saint-Cosme and Evailles. At the abbey of Croix-val, whither he had retired to end his days, he received from the imprisoned Mary of Scotland a set of plate worth 2000 crowns, with the inscription: *À Ronsard, l' Apollon de la Source des Muses*. Queen Elizabeth had sent him already a set of diamonds.

The epic, of which an imaginary Francus of Troy was the hero, broke off at the stem before the plant had come into flower. But the Pindaric odes reached their full maturity of strophe, antistrophe, epode, and all the dithyrambic flights the finest lyrical frenzy could desire. Their only lack was that of the true lyrical fire which should have glowed through all this measured extravagance. It is not to be wondered at, that he should have failed in such an adventure. Who has succeeded in it in any modern language? His imitations of Anacreon's pretty, sportive, graceful little pictures were more successful. There are, too, fine pieces in the Horatian manner, especially one noble little poem in which he pours forth a stirring invective against the wood-cutters who had laid low the

primeval trees of the forest of Gastine. There is, too, a strong vein of sound feeling in his *Discours sur les misères du temps*. We find so much that is good in him, in fine, that while we must discard and even wonder at the extravagant admiration felt for him by his contemporaries, our judgment must be that, however greatly he may be deficient in taste and tact, he certainly does not lack genius.

So much cannot be said for Jodelle, who aimed at reviving Sophocles and Terence, as Ronsard had sought to bring back the epic and lyric poets. Jodelle believed in poetic inspiration apparently, for he wrote with facility and in haste. It took him only a few weeks to prepare his tragedy of *Cléopâtre*, and his comedy of *Eugène ou la Rencontre*. They were performed before the court and had immediate and brilliant success. Jodelle, escorted by his friends, went in triumphal procession from Rheims to Arceuil, met on the way a he-goat, seized him, decked him with ivy and ribands, and dragged him into their festal hall, where Ronsard improvised a dithyrambic ode. This drinking-bout seems to have been so much to the taste of Jodelle, that even his glory and the patronage of kings were not incentives strong enough to hold him back from ruin. He ceased to produce, and Garnier took his place as the dramatist of the revivers of classical taste.

Remy Belleau, among the poets of this group, though not tainted like the rest with pedantry, survives only in his dancing and joyous *Avril*, a little song that sings itself. Baïf, imitator of Moschus and Theocritus, was a complete pedant. He even sought to introduce the comparative and superlative forms from the Latin, which drew upon him Du Bellay's ironical sonnet, ending with the verse.

Docte, doctieur et doctime Baïf.

One who pushed the faults of Ronsard to the ex-

treme was Guillaume-Salluste, seigneur du Bartas, brave follower of Henri of Navarre. His last song was in celebration of the victory of Ivry, which Macaulay has so stirringly sung in English. It was strange that Du Bartas should have clung so eagerly to the poetical creed of Ronsard, for no one could have more sincerely and more gallantly opposed the religious and political creed of the Ronsard clique. In fact, while using their style, he eschewed their pagan themes and chose Biblical subjects by preference. His first heroine was Judith, the Hebrew deliverer. His next work, the *Semaine*, was a commentary on the account given in Genesis of the creation. Full of sins against good taste, as he is, the loftiness of his spirit and his serious and often grand thought have blinded foreigners to his faults of style. He was not only much admired and translated in his own day, but even in later days Goethe is to be found reproaching the French with their lack of appreciation for one whom he considers one of the greatest of their poets.

Beside Du Bartas, in the camp, in the field, at the desk, was another soldier of Henri of Navarre. This was Théodore-Agrippi d'Aubigné, the grandfather of an unworthy but famous descendant, Madame de Maintenon. Like Du Bartas, he is of the school of Ronsard, though of the faith of Calvin. His satirical poem, called *Tragiques*, is a sort of Juvenal with the flavor of the Hebrew prophets superadded. Prolixity is the curse of this otherwise strong poet. It is impossible for the reader to keep up the bitter disgust and hate with which the poet seeks to inspire him, through eleven thousand verses. Bad as the kings of the house of Valois were, it is too much to hear them reviled at a rate that only the antediluvians could have found time for.

D'Aubigné wrote, besides, the *Confession de Sancy*, the *Adventures de Foeneste*, the *Histoire Universelle*.

and his racy, frank, and entertaining *Mémoires*. But the group of memoirs—and it is a large one—belongs to the time of Henry IV.'s reign, not to that of his struggle with the League.

Imitators of Ronsard, also, were Desportes and Bertaut;—Desportes, rich abbé of Tiron, Bonport, Aurillac, and other places, who kept a good table, and to whom Malherbe once said: "Your *potage* is much better than your psalms;"—Bertaut, who survives in virtue of two short but exquisite passages of sweet melancholy. Desportes would not have come down to posterity, had his fame depended upon those psalms of which Malherbe spoke so slightly. It was to his earlier pieces, his love-songs, that he owed his reputation; and Henri de Guise was humming one of them but a short time before he fell at Blois under the dagger of the Valois prince. Of Bertaut's little pearls, one, though bright, is so small that it may well be strung here:

" *Félicité passée*  
*Qui ne peux revenir,*  
*Tourment de ma pensée,*  
 Que n'ai-je en te perdant perdu le souvenir!"

Sainte-Beuve says of this, that the mothers of his generation knew it still and sang it.

Garnier, the dramatist, though of some merit, has had the same fate of remaining little more than a name on the roll-call of French poets.

Another of the same school was the Norman, Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, a pastoral poet of some grace and delicacy, a satirist and imitator of Horace's moral epistles of some seriousness and elevation of tone.

This group of would-be reformers, with Ronsard at their head, though over-doing their work, were a benefit to the literature and especially the poetry of France. The minds of richest culture, whose

store of Greek and Latin made them inclined to despair of expressing themselves in the rude mother-tongue, were encouraged by the popularity of Ronsard and his fellows to engage in the task of polishing it. Such an effort could not fail in the end to enrich and ennoble the language.

## VI.

## FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO RICHELIEU.

THE massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day was the most violent feature of a struggle, partly political and partly religious, which made France a battlefield for more than a quarter of a century. Torn by contending factions, amid the horrors of a dynastic and religious war, she was retarded in her development, and, in the end, was stripped of many of the best elements of national prosperity.

It was the news of this horrible massacre which crushed the last hope for his country of her ablest and most impartial statesman, the Chancellor, Michel de l'Hôpital. It was his firm opposition to the scheme of the Cardinal de Lorraine for the establishment of the Inquisition in France that alone saved his country from that curse. The States-General had not met for eighty years. Relying on the support of the moderate Catholics, the Chancellor convoked that body, and addressed it in a discourse which deserves to hold a conspicuous place in the literature of his country as a model of eloquence, of equity, and of statesmanlike prudence. He declares there the great principle that religious belief cannot be coerced by force, but must be won by persuasion. "Gentleness," said he, "will avail more than rigor. Let us do away with those diabolical words—names of party, faction, and sedition—Lutherans, Huguenots, Papists. Let us not change our name of Christians."

After his retirement to his manor of Vignay, when the civil war had broken out, he addressed to the king a remarkable memoir, in which he warmly pleaded the cause of the Reformed, and showed that



the only remedy for the evils that threatened the State, was to satisfy the rightful claims of a party too strong for the royalists to hope to destroy it. Geruzez closes his account of the life and labors of this eminent man, after large citations from his able state-papers, with these words:—

“His high intelligence and the purity of his heart put him, not outside, but above the parties of his time; the firmness of his character kept him there. The law of the Athenians against those citizens who held aloof from the conflict of parties would not have reached him. As long as it was possible, he remained in the arena and gave it law. Too clear of vision, too virtuous, to follow any of the banners spread abroad by the factions, he raised his own, and around that flag he called all that were right-minded, all that had hearts devoted to the public welfare. He knew how to consummate the alliance of politics and morals. He displayed the ability of a statesman, without ever having recourse to perfidy. He was altogether calm and inflexible.”

L' Hôpital had stood up, in the heat of the contest between mutually hating factions, impartial and independent. There were others, whom the heated atmosphere of conflict affected with as strong a disgust for the violence of extremes, but who did not, like the Chancellor, stand in the breach. Their mission was to philosophize, since they did not find a field in which to act. Of this number was Montaigne's friend, Étienne de la Boétie, formed by his studies of Greek and Roman literature into an enthusiastic republican. His doctrines were set forth in his discourse *De la Servitude volontaire*, a very youthful but impassioned and eloquent rhapsody in the cause of liberty.

By the side of La Boétie in this labor of love, though of an earlier day, was Jacques Amyot, whose share in the task of kindling the passion for freedom was the translation of Plutarch. Both La Boétie and Michel de Montaigne imbibed not a lit-

tle of their love for antiquity from Amyot. How much Montaigne admired him may be seen from his express declaration: "I give the palm to Jacques Amyot above all the writers of his time for freshness and purity of language."

Montaigne himself is the prince of doubters, opposing to the fanaticisms of his time a steady front of calm, good-natured questioning. The old Gascon country-gentleman is to this day a favorite with men who know and care nothing about the disorders of his time against which his half-pagan philosophy was reasoned out to fortify his own spirit. What is the secret of his charm? Bulwer-Lytton says, that it is his admirable knowledge of the world, his knowledge of the human heart and of his own heart. Others say, it is his easy, good-natured, familiar tone, taking the reader, as it were, into his confidence, and making him feel almost as if he were holding conference with himself, all his wisdom being what Blackstone describes the Common-Law to be, "the perfection of common-sense." Others say, it is the Horatian mixture of sound sense and sprightly wit and honest sentiment, neither too high nor too low for the better sort of mankind. Perhaps it is all these, and the added fact that he has stamped his individuality so strongly upon his *Essays*, that we feel that we know him better than we do many with whom we are thrown almost daily. It is his style, his clear, fresh, natural style, that has done this. He really has nothing to tell us, that we do not know already, and better than he or any man of his century could know it. But the inimitable manner in which he says what he has to say, is the charm by which he holds us. It is just the same with Horace. No revolution of taste, no new discoveries can put these men out of their rightful place among the small select band loved in every age by the reflective class of readers as personal friends.

To his free discursive style the language owes a

great debt. Had he been merely a devotee of the classics, like Ronsard, or had he been as utterly lawless in the use of provincialisms and the Aristophanic coinage of new words, as was Rabelais, he might have contributed far less to the language. But his judicious importation of new terms, by good derivation from the Latin, was in the main accepted by his contemporaries and his successors. Le Clerc gives words so common as *gratitude*, *enfantillage*, *diversion*, and *enjoué*, as among the very many introduced by Montaigne. Several of those named by Le Clerc as not ultimately received into the language, have become good English. Such are *condiment*, *equanimité*, *improvidence*, *inanité*.

A story is told by his contemporary, Étienne Pasquier, in one of his letters, which illustrates the confidence Montaigne had in the excellence of his French, however sprinkled it might be with occasional Gasconisms. The two friends were walking together in the court of the Château de Blois, during the session there of the States-General in 1588, when during their talk on literary matters Pasquier observed that there was many a trace of Gascon speech in the *Essays*. "As he would not believe me," says Pasquier, "I took him to my room, where I had his book, and there pointed out to him many words which are familiar, not to Frenchmen, but only to Gascons, as *un patenostre*, *un debte*, *un recontre*; and such phrases as *ces ouvrages sentent à l'huile* or *à la lampe*. Especially I showed him that he used the word *jouir* altogether after the fashion of Gascony, and not according to the practice of our French tongue, as *la santé que je jouis jusques à présent*, *l'amitié est jouie à mesure qu'elle est désirée*, *la vraie solitude se peut jouir au milieu des villes*, &c. Many other phrases did I point out to him, not only with regard to this word, but to many others also. And I imagined that he would order all these things to be corrected in the next then forthcoming edition of his book. But

not only did he do nothing of the sort, but when it came to pass that he was overtaken by death, his adopted daughter caused everything to be printed exactly as it stood, and in her preliminary letter told us that his widow had sent her the MS. in the condition in which he had intended that it should appear."

Excellent adopted daughter! She certainly understood Montaigne much better than did his worthy, but somewhat pedantic friend. Montaigne was proud of being a Gascon, and liked to keep the Gascon flavor about his French. The purists would take all distinctive flavors out of every noble and highly individual style, if they could have their way.

But the greatest merit of Montaigne—a merit which he shares with the Chancellor de l'Hôpital—was the spirit of tolerance. Toleration of the opinions of others was the key-note of his whole system of thought. It is an amazing fact in the history of that age of bitter intolerance that two such men as the Chancellor and the Gascon philosopher should have been able to keep their minds so pure from all taint of this most contagious of diseases. That they did so uniformly and courageously is more to their credit than any other excellence that can be found in the career or the writings of either of them. Like de l'Hôpital, Montaigne's place in the dissensions of his time was that of mediator between the contending parties, and he kept up friendly relations with men of all creeds. That he was unable to keep that impartially inquiring tendency of his mind, which expressed itself in his favorite motto, *Que sais-je?*, out of the sphere of religious dogma, is certain. But he was far from being a professed unbeliever, and died in the act of painfully raising himself in bed to receive the last rites of his Church.

It remains to make some brief mention of his personal history. He was of English extraction,

which may account for that tinge of humor, which is so unlike anything French, that pervades his essays.

His real family name was Eyquem, the surname, de Montaigne, being taken from the little manor of Montaigne in the department of the Dordogne, which he inherited. His father, whose memory he greatly revered and of whom he speaks as often and as fondly as Horace does of his, brought him up very carefully, having special instructors for him, and suffering him to speak only Latin from his earliest years. One of his masters was the famous scholar, George Buchanan. He received in 1554 the appointment of Counsellor to the Parliament of Bordeaux, and was in the reigns of Francis II. and Charles IX. a follower of the court in several cities. But, having in 1570 succeeded to his inheritance, he gave up his appointment, retired to his château, and devoted himself to his books and his writings, varying this occupation by travels for his health in Germany and Italy, where he studied men and manners. Twice serving as Mayor of Bordeaux, after his return from his travels, he continued to write his *Essays*—of which five editions were published during his lifetime—until his death in 1592, in the sixtieth year of his age.

We have already seen something of Pasquier, in his interview with Montaigne at Blois. He was a friend worthy of the sincere and thoughtful Gascon gentleman. His studies in the early history of his country were made to bear fruit in his *Recherches*; and his *Lettres*, from which the passage lately quoted was taken, are still of value as containing the testimony of an acute and observing witness on many important facts in the history of his times. He bore no ignoble part in the events of a period in which there were so many ignoble characters and so many unworthy deeds. He deserves credit, too, for raising his voice, along with the President Claude Fauchet, against the universal depreciation

of the older literature of the country, of which Ronsard had set the fashion.

A man of considerable learning and member of a family of famous printers and publishers, Henri Estienne, took just the opposite course in his *Apologie pour Hérodote*. He wrote, besides, two works still read by philologists, his *Précurrence du Langage français*, and the *Dialogues du français italianisé*. His father published the French Bible of 1545.

Among the writers of the sixteenth century must also be mentioned Jean Bodin, the author of the *République*, and Charron, the author of the *Sagesse*. As both these writers were mere imitators, any detailed criticism of them would be waste of time.

It is quite otherwise with François de La Noue, the hardy and able soldier, the soul of honor, beloved by the Huguenots and respected by the Catholics, who called him the "Protestant Bayard." His impartial spirit and love of justice are as manifest in his *Discours politiques et militaires*, composed during his five years' imprisonment, as in his conduct through the course of a most eventful life. Nervous, energetic, and rhetorical in his style, like De l'Hôpital, he resembles him also in his thought. Both were just and high-minded men, though of different creeds.

Opposed to La Noue, we have the equally gallant soldier, the equally able narrator, but bitter Catholic leader, Blaise de Montluc, of whose *Commentaires* Henri of Navarre, Huguenot chief as he was, said, that it was *la Bible des capitaines*.

The religious and dynastic wars of this period were accompanied by furious party pamphlets and by the atrocious sermons of the preachers of the League, inciting to assassination—men, at a later day, disavowed with horror by Bossuet, in the name of the Church. These rancorous productions of party-spirit were scathingly rebuked by the famous *Satyre Menippée*, a work composed by a number of

writers, at the head of whom were the canons, Pierre Le Roy and Claude Gillot. During that conference in which Henri IV. went through the form of conversion from the Huguenot faith to the Catholic, in the year 1593, these canons, with Florent Chrestien, Nicolas Rapin, the learned Passerat, and the profound jurisconsult, Pierre Pithou, set about their congenial task of confounding the extremists. It is by a comedy in which the bitter Swiftian irony plays the greatest part, that they accomplish their object of laughing down the zealots.

At the same time that these satirists were uttering their eloquent prose, there came forward another satirist, the poet Mathurin Régnier. He, however, attacked the manners and morals of the time, without meddling with affairs of State. With fine passages, and abounding in clearly drawn and vigorous pictures, choice in his language, though capricious and irregular in the movement of his thought, he is a powerful but unequal poet.

To the same period belongs Malherbe, whom French critics exalt as a master in good taste and as rather a moulder of French verse into careful propriety than as a profound thinker or an impassioned singer. The ode to Marie de Médicis on the happy success of her regency is signalized as the most finished of Malherbe's works. He was more critic than poet, and had pupils to whom he gave oral lessons in the art of poetry, among them Honorat de Bueil, Marquis de Racan, and the President Maynard. Boileau and La Fontaine, in the next age, give high praise to Malherbe and Racan. Demogeot, after commenting on their faults, sums up his criticism by declaring their merits. "Malherbe," he says, "introduced into the loftier class of literary work the element of truth, Maynard dexterity (*finesse*), Racan grace and sentiment."

The interminably drawn out pastoral of Honoré d'Urfé, the *Astrée*, imitated from the *Diana* of Montemayor, so immensely popular in that age

and long after, brought into vogue the affected and highly sophisticated shepherds and shepherdesses, that held so large a place in the literature, first of Italy and Spain, and then of both France and England. Racan followed this lead in his *Bergeries*, but without attaining the success, or indeed the merit, of d'Urfé. A pastoral drama, such as the *Bergeries*, by putting into action on the stage the unrealities of conventional shepherds, naturally brought out in strong relief the absurdity of the whole conception. Yet there are in this long-winded, five-act play some fine lines of true poetry, breathing a heartfelt love of the country.

Maynard had a more nervous and pointed style, and, disappointed in his hopes of court-favor, launched one sonnet at Richelieu which is so good as to be numbered among the few that rank as really excellent.

Among the wild poets of the court, who, like Maynard, produced some immodest pieces, was one, who was so imprudent as to make enemies of men capable of making his sins against morality a pretext for persecuting him. This was Théophile Viaud. For a collection, called the *Parnasse satirique*—to which Maynard was one of the contributors—Viaud was burned in effigy on the *Place de Grève*. In his prison, however, he wrote defenses of himself, which give him high rank as a prose writer. As a poet, and especially as author of the tragedy of *Pyrame et Thisbé*, he falls into the vices of Spanish hyperbole and Italian conceits.

We reach now a writer, whose influence upon French prose has been very great. Balzac has been called the Malherbe of prose; but he was something more than this. It is true that he laid great stress on cadence, on harmony, on purity of style, on choice and propriety of diction, on pleasing the ear while enlightening the mind. But he was also capable of lofty and no-



ble thought. Still, he did not possess a sufficiently powerful mind, with force and compass of thought and unity of design enough, to round and complete a master-work. There is no big heart behind that bright intelligence of his, to concentrate its rays and flash them into a steady stream of light or warm them into a burning fire. Yet there is fine and glowing rhetoric, especially in the *Socrate chrétien*, and strong polemical argument in the *Entretiens à Ménandre*. His great merit, indeed, is rhetorical skill; and the language owes him much in point of style. It is also his fault, as with Dryden and Macaulay among English writers, for Dryden's prose is like Macaulay's in respect to this same monotony of brilliant and pointed finish.

In Guez de Balzac we have the note-mark of the polish of the seventeenth century. At the close of the century was to form, like mutually attracted atoms that move into crystallized shape, that cluster of men of genius which constituted the golden age of French literature. Balzac is therefore a notable figure of the period. He is, moreover, as Géroze says, the link and the mediator between the *hôtel Rambouillet* and the *Académie française*.

Madame de Rambouillet, the "Arthénice" of that affected coterie, whose pedantries were so easily caricatured by Molière, and whose influence was yet so wholesome in removing filthy conversation from the language of society, looked up to Balzac as to an oracle. Equally was he so regarded by Richelieu's newly-founded Society of the Learned.

The dainty marquise and her friends, the fine ladies called *les Précieuses*, shunning the camp-vulgarized court of Henri IV., in their efforts to maintain a pure-thinking and pure-speaking society, did succeed in giving elegance, delicacy, and grace to the spoken tongue. They even did some service to morals in forcing vice, out of a new-born shame, to pay virtue the homage of abstaining from expressing itself openly.

The first glory of the *Hôtel Rambouillet* began with the mother of the charming marquise, Julie Savelli, wife of the Marquis Jean de Vivonne, Italian by birth, and the child of a higher civilization in point of manners than France had yet reached. Her daughter, Catherine de Vivonne, who became the Marquise de Rambouillet, inherited the winning Florentine sparkle of the mother and the peculiar sweetness of the southern manner. She was well versed, too, in the rich literatures of Italy and Spain. Demogeot, in citing the testimony of Tallemant des Réaux to the charms of this queen of society, remarks that Tallemant can find only one fault in her, and that is an excessive delicacy in language; to which he adds: "And when one reads Tallemant, one cannot help recognizing the fact that this 'fault' is but one virtue the more."

Her influence on literature, however, aside from her high regard for decency in thought and language, was not good. Her preferences for foreign models tended to encourage bad taste, the artificial Marini being then the guiding star in Italian literature, and equally dangerous models in another direction attracting French imitators towards Spanish literature. Inflated language was the mark of weakness borne by the Spanish; perpetual effort at wit and point, that exhibited by the Italian.

The most brilliant period of the *Hôtel Rambouillet* was from the death of Malherbe to that of Voiture—from 1628 to 1648. It owed much of its fame to the wit and grace of one of the Marquise's daughters, the celebrated Julie d'Angennes. Around the brilliant mother and daughter were gathered at those famous sessions, called the *ruelles* in that day as later they were called *salons*, a dazzling band of women, fair and witty and high-born. There were the Princesse de Condé, the last of Henri IV.'s passions, that witty Charlotte de Montmorency, whose husband had to hurry her away from the fascinated eyes of the old Béarnese;

Mademoiselle du Vigueau, the great Condé's first love; Mademoiselle de Bourbon, afterwards the famous Madame de Longueville; Richelieu's niece, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon; that mistress of cookery as well as of gallantry, the Marquise de Sablé; Madame de la Vergue; the Comtesse de Fiesque; the Comtesse de Saint-Martin; the Duchesse de Chevreuse; the young and brilliant Marquise de Sévigné; the Comtesse de Maure; and that tawny-tressed Mademoiselle Paulet, whose locks and leonine spirit won her the *sobriquet* of "Lioness."

Quite as select were the masculine visitors, including the Condés, the Contis, the La Rochefoucaulds, the Bussys, the Grammonts, to whom were added such literary men as Chapelain, Conrart, Cotin, Pélisson, Segrais, Benserade, and, in the later days, Corneille himself.

In paying his court to the "adorable Julie," Montausier devised a graceful tribute, which brought all the poets together in an act of homage to the young lady of the house of Rambouillet. On the 1st of January, 1641, she found on her toilette, in waking up, *deux cahiers de vélin*, exactly alike, each leaf of which contained a picture of a lovely flower, painted in miniature by Robert, and under it a madrigal composed by one of the poets. Chapelain, Godeau, Colletat, Scudéry, Desmarest, and Corneille were among the nineteen who wrote the verses for the twenty-nine flowers of this *Guirlande de Julie*.

This delicate and intellectual style of compliment was characteristic of the whole order of intercourse between the sexes in that elegant mansion. The lofty spirit and noble sentiments of Corneille's heroes and heroines were born there; the fine language and even its over-strained stateliness, were born there, too.

But no man can be monk, or woman nun, without narrowing the whole nature; no society can isolate itself without suffering the penalty of be-

coming conventional in its ideas and frivolous in its productions. This fate came to the Rambouillet circle; and the affectations it fell into were of course greatly exaggerated by the circles that imitated it, especially those in the provinces. It was the absurdities of these imitators that Molière afterwards ridiculed in his *Précieuses ridicules*. The real *Précieuses* may be said to have disbanded when Julie followed her husband, the Duc de Montausier, in 1648, to his governorship of Saintonge. It was also the date of Vincent Voiture's death.

Voiture had been the special mouth-piece, in prose and in verse, of this spirited little society of purists. Euphuist in grain, he lavishes his wit in prodigal display, playing with words and ideas alike, seeking far-fetched congruities and contrasts, jesting and trifling pleasantly, sometimes with really charming fancy, and yet not making too much of his diverting trifles. He was, however, something more than a mere literary man, for, with true political foresight, he was among the first to appreciate the policy of Richelieu, and early became his staunch supporter.

A friend of Voiture's and a writer in the same light and pleasant vein, was Sarrasin, the author of the *Testament de Goulû*, the *Ballade d'Eulever*, the *Ode sur la bataille de Lens*. He was capable of stronger things, and won fame as a good prose writer in his *Siège de Dunkerque*. But Sarrasin belonged to the circle of Mademoiselle de Scudéry, which was a sort of subdivision of that of the *Hôtel Rambouillet*, almost a secession from it, mere authors being covertly a little laughed at by the great lady who presided there.

But when we have reached Balzac, the Marquise de Rambouillet, Mademoiselle de Scudéry, Voiture, and Sarrasin, we have fairly touched upon the beginning of Richelieu's influence in the literary sphere; and this influence, with its far-reaching effects, must give us a new starting point,

One valuable part, however, of the literature of Henri IV.'s time must be mentioned, before we take up the writers of Richelieu's period. To the beginning of the seventeenth century must be assigned those instructive and entertaining memoirs of men who took part in the affairs of the troubled period which coincides in the main with the closing years of the sixteenth century; and who have so admirably painted for us the manners, opinions, style, and minute historical details of their time.

The best of these memoirs are those of that bitter partisan of the League, the Vicomte Jean de Tavannes; those of Henri IV.'s great minister, Maximilien de Béthune, Marquis de Rosny and Duc de Sully; those of Henri's tutor, Pierre Palma Cayet; those of Pierre de Lestoile; those of Henri's first wife, Marguerite of France; those of the staunch Huguenot captains, Agrippa d'Aubigné and Du Plessis-Mornay, the "Pope of the Huguenots." To these must be added the memoirs of Brantôme, the greatest anecdote-teller of them all, the most amusing, and personally the least worthy. Matthieu, too, should be mentioned, as the author of several histories of events in his own times. All of these writers are grouped, in one way or another, about the person of Henri of Navarre. De Thou, who belongs to the same time, and whose History has great qualities, unfortunately wrote in Latin, and has therefore no claim to a place in French literature.

Among the other memoirs of from 1555 to 1650, are those of Guillaume de Saulx-Tavannes, Antoine des Puget, Jean de Mergey, Philippe Hurault, Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne, Boivin du Villars, Charles de Valois, and Nicolas de Neufville. They furnish ample material for the thorough study of their period, and contribute largely to the making up of a true history of France. Demogeot warmly praises the style and matter of Du Plessis-Mornay.

“The language of Mornay,” he says, “resembles his costume: it is still *à la Coligny*. It is the old language of the 16th century with its archaisms and its labored constructions. But all the energy, all the masculine pride of his soul flashes forth every moment from the cloud. His style is admirable in firmness and nobleness. Deeply read and learned, with the sap of antiquity quickening his intellect, made wiser to understand the past by his experience in affairs, the vigor of his discourse recalls that of the speeches in Thucydides. Writer and soldier, his written thought shines and smites like a sword.”

## VII.

## FROM RICHELIEU TO LOUIS XIV.

THE taste for poetry which led Mæcenas to perpetrate bad verses did not, fortunately, expend itself solely in that direction. The same propensity in the great statesman who ruled France for so many years during a most critical period, was also allied to a happy appreciation of the importance of linking his career with the names and works of great men of letters. It was his misfortune that he was not always able to distinguish between mere men of letters and men of genius. Still, his influence on French literature was beneficial. The establishment of the *Académie Française*, for the maintenance of the purity of the language and the elevation of literary men to an order in the State, was one of the most remarkable of the Cardinal de Richelieu's achievements. To this glory, he added another. This was the stimulus his patronage gave to the dramatic art.

Armand du Plessis de Richelieu, made bishop of Luçon by Henri IV., first attracted attention to his genius for affairs by the very able speech which he made as the representative of the clergy at the meeting of the States-General in 1614. The court became eager to secure the services of such a man. Attached to the service of the queen, Marie de Médici, he remained at court until the fall of the Concini ministry. In his retirement from public affairs, which lasted for seven years, he produced a number of theological works, of no extraordinary merit. The queen-mother, resuming her influence at court, Richelieu was raised to the dignity of Cardinal and became Prime Minister.

The great work which he accomplished of unifying France, of strengthening the monarchy into actual absolutism, and of making his country the greatest power in Europe, we have nothing to do with here. It is only of his share in the literary progress of France that I shall speak. Of his own works, the correspondence, and the accounts of his administration entitled the *Succincte narration des grandes actions du roi*, and the *Testament politique*, are all stamped with the seal of his great political and administrative genius. His *Mémoires*, though full of tedious passages and displays of bad taste, have great value as material for history.

The work of ruling a great state and carrying on difficult negotiations with foreign powers was not enough for his active spirit; even the added task of compiling memoirs did not fill all his leisure. He found time for attempts at purely literary work. "What do you think I take the greatest pleasure in doing?" he asked one day of Bois-Robert. "Monseigneur," was the courtier's reply, "it is in making the happiness of France." "Not at all," said the Cardinal, "it is in making verses."

He loved to invent plots for plays, which he would put into the hands of his poets to be worked out. Sometimes he would furnish whole scenes, sometimes a number of lines. His poets, Bois-Robert, Colletet, L'Etoile, Rotron, and Corneille, were known by the name of The Cardinal's Brigade. He cut out their work for them, assigning an act to each. Pélisson tells us that *Mirame*, which appeared as the work of Des Marets, was wholly the Cardinal's. He had built, expressly for its representation, a magnificent hall in the Palais-Cardinal. The same authority assures us that he wrote no less than five hundred verses of the *Grande Pastorale*.

The numerous tragedies and pastorals put upon the stage of the *Hôtel Marais* by that rapid improver of plays, Alexandre Hardy—he wrote over



six hundred—had kept the taste of the public for these entertainments from flagging, and had also trained actors who were to be fit instruments for expressing the genius of Corneille.

Théophile de Viau, Racan, De Bourron, Borée, De La Croix, Pichou, Du Cros, Rayssiguier, Gombault, and Mairet, followed with various pieces which made the theatre still more popular and at the same time elevated the taste of the public. Still, there was among scholars a felt want of order and law in the French drama, and it was largely this demand for authority over the new development of literature which led to the founding of the *Académie Française*. Chapelain was foremost among these reformers. He strongly represented to Richelieu the necessity for the observance of the three unities of time, place, and action, laid down by Aristotle. Richelieu was delighted with the counsel, gave Chapelain full authority over his poets, and promised him a pension of a thousand crowns as dramatic critic. Mairet wrote his *Sophonisbe* in accordance with this regulation. It was the first play in the French classic style.

There was a warm but short struggle between the favorers of the free drama, such as Spain and England recognized, and the regulated drama, which became the form respected by the great masters of the French theatre. The public, the actors, and most of the authors preferred the free drama. But the Cardinal was too strong for them. On the very eve of great public affairs, in 1635, when France was about to engage in the Thirty Years' War, shutting himself up with his Brigade, the five poets, Richelieu dictated his plots to them, and set them to work. Colletet especially worked to his liking; but he was dissatisfied with Corneille, and withdrew his favor from him. Des Marets took his place. One of Des Marets' pieces, the *Visionnaires*, long held the reputation of being the finest comedy in the language.

But the withdrawal of the Cardinal's favor from Corneille was the emancipation of a great poet. He could never have produced his grand works under the tutelage of another.

Pierre Corneille was born at Rouen in 1606. His father being an advocate, he was intended for the same profession; but the bent of his genius drove him to dramatic composition. His earlier pieces, *Mélite*, performed with success in 1629, *Citandre*, *La Veuve*, *La Galerie du Palais*, *La Suivante*, and *La Place Royale*, secured him popular favor, but gave little indication of his really great qualities. Neither did the *Medée*, written in imitation of Seneca, reveal his true power.

Meanwhile, he had earned Richelieu's ill-will by his audacity, it is said, in altering the plan of a comedy which the Cardinal had suggested to him. Giving his attention to the study of Spanish literature, he now produced the *Cid*, and enjoyed his first great triumph. The public were wholly unprepared for this intensity of passion, this outburst of thrilling poetry. There was an eager enthusiasm kindled for the poet's new creations, and Chiméne and Rodrigue seized the hearts of all as if by storm. The impassioned love of the South, which is so sweet and fresh and always young—the same that charms us in *Romeo and Juliet*;—heroic sentiment, worthy of Spain's chivalry; tragic woe that wrings the heart, stirred every soul and forced the conviction on the nation that a great poet had arisen for France.

But the triumph of the poet did not deliver him from the envy of Richelieu. Chapelain was detailed to draw up a damnatory criticism which the reluctant Academy was to be induced to publish as its own decision. Mairet and Scudéri were arrayed against the offending poet. But Chapelain, who is chiefly memorable as having butchered poor Jeanne Darc over again in his *La Pucelle*, was not the man to stand before a giant like Corneille, now that he was

beginning to know himself. Nor was Scudéri, whose fatal facility was of the sort that Horace laughs at in a poet of his day, and whose *Lygdamon* and *L'Amour tyrannique* and *Alaric*, and other such improvisations have long since been dead, if indeed they can be said to have ever lived. Nor was Mairet, though there was some merit in that *Sophonisbe*, which the *Cid* had cast into the shade.

The *Cid* appeared in 1636, and, in spite of the jealousy of Richelieu's poets and the enforced coldness of the Academy, was soon so popular with the public, that "beautiful as the *Cid*" became a proverb. His detractors having accused him of plagiarizing the best parts of the *Cid* from Guillem de Castro, Corneille now set himself the task of writing his *Horace*, on the hint furnished by Livy's brief story of the Horatii and Curiatii, no dramatist having yet made use of the legend.

By some French critics *Horace* is regarded as the most vigorous and the most original effort of Corneille's genius. The characters of Sabine and Camille are as finely contrasted in this play as those of Horace and Curiace, and the situations are very moving, while the whole action of the piece is powerfully wrought out. But the elder Horace is as vigorously drawn as any of the characters brought into immediate action, and the famous *qu'il mourût!* the words regarded as of highest sublimity in the whole range of French literature, proceed from the stern lips of this proud Roman father.

His next Roman play, *Cinna*, is considered by others among the French critics as Corneille's masterpiece. The impersonation in this piece of the spirit of liberty is Émilie, the ward of Augustus, but the beloved of Pompey's grandson. The scene of the conspiracy, that in which the Emperor deliberates whether he shall retire from his exalted post or hold it against all assaults, the heroic pardon granted to the conspirators, are noble efforts of the poet, in whom majesty of action and dignity of

sentiment found their best expression. But there is an inconsistency forced both on the plot and on the characters of the conspirators by the favorable turn of events which prevents that which was throughout most tragical in its spirit and preparation from turning out a tragedy at all.

Corneille's next play was *Polyeucte*, a tragedy of Christian martyrdom. The hero and Pauline, the heroine, draw the deepest sympathy from every hearer or reader. No picture could be more pathetic than that of these lovers giving up all, in the bloom of their youth and the joy of their love, at the call of duty.

In his next play, Corneille had the boldness to fill the air of his stage with the glory of a dead hero, the play, *Pompée*, bearing the name of the great Roman, but not presenting him in person. "The dead Pompey," says Géroze, "fills the whole scene. He lives again in the virile face of Cornelia. It is to satisfy his angry manes that the infamous Ptolemy perishes, and the last words of his widow promise against Cæsar himself a thrilling vengeance." It was a strong conception, but it is marred in the execution by an excess of declamation and emphasis in the language put into the mouths of the chief characters. The turgid rhetoric of Lucan makes him a peculiarly dangerous author to draw one's inspiration from; and with Corneille he was a great favorite.

Corneille produced these masterpieces in the course of six years. He was now the acknowledged master in the domain of tragedy. There was no one to compete with him. Mairet had done nothing better than the *Sophonisbe*. Du Ryer had in his *Scévole* brought out some of that same fine old Roman tone of heroic spirit, which Corneille loved to make the stage ring with; but Du Ryer could not hope to rival the "noblest Roman of them all." Tristan had touched a chord of pathos in his *Marianne*, but not so thrilling in its notes of

tender yet heroic anguish as that which the Christian martyrs in *Polyeucte* had moved the hearts of men with. Rotrou, Corneille's staunch friend, had not yet produced anything of marked value, though destined in after years to keep some hold on the memory by his *Venceslas* and his *Saint-Genest*.

Cornille was thus alone, at a great height above his contemporaries, in the sphere of tragedy. He now surprised every one with a brilliant success in comedy. As in the case of his first great triumph in tragedy, he had drawn his inspiration from Spain, so was it now in the case of his comic masterpiece, the *Menteur*.

Dorante, that exquisite liar who gives name to the comedy, is a masterly creation. There is an easy grace and a naturalness in Corneille's merri-ment, which strike us as really wonderful when we contrast these traits with the grandeur of thought and tone which is the dominant characteristic of his nobler tragedies.

To these great successes in tragedy and comedy, Corneille added some essays in the domain of the opera, in his *Andromède*, the *Toison d'or*, and *Psyché*.

Among his later tragedies, *Rodogune*, *Héraclius*, and *Nicomède* are not without merit, though bearing some traces of carelessness in style. These plays also furnish examples of some of those qualities which, though not so marked in Corneille as his grand diction and elevated tone, are eminently traits of genius. I refer to his variety of means and motive, of characterization and plot. He is no shoemaker with one last, no painter with one color. If taxed, however unjustly, with plagairism from Spanish authors, no one could venture to charge him with copying himself.

As to the tone of his works, it is true that, in his great plays, he has given expression to but one side of human nature, the heroic. But to how many varieties of the heroic has he given expression, and

in how many varying situations has he set the heroic before us! And, if it be complained that after all it is a monotony of heroism, it is surely glory enough for one writer that he has so nobly portrayed the dignity of the human soul.

Evil times coming upon France during the regency of Anne of Austria, Corneille seems to have been affected by the general feebleness of the political conflict around him. He produced works greatly inferior to his *Polyeucte* during this period, ceased after a time to produce at all, and lived to see Racine take his place in popular estimation. He died in 1684.

While the dramatic genius of Corneille was adding noble treasures to the literature of France, the philosophical speculations of Des Cartes, the physical studies of Gassendi, and the theological controversies of the Jansenists were dividing into different camps the reflecting minds of the age. As the principal works of Gassendi and Des Cartes were in Latin, we have nothing to do with them here, except to say that both denied the authority of Aristotle, and proclaimed the emptiness of the scholastic philosophy, though differing widely from each other in the views with which they sought to replace the old system of thought. Des Cartes, however, in his *Discours de la Méthode*, which appeared shortly after the *Cid*, brings himself within our scope, as a producer in the mother-tongue. The fundamental principle of his thought, as there set forth, is to know himself in order that he may arrive at the knowledge of God and of nature. He pursues his speculations in clear and simple language, severely simple and direct.

The Jansenist controversy led to the persecution of the Port Royalists, and this to the brilliant defence of that school of religious belief by Pascal. It will be fitting, therefore, as an introduction to Pascal's literary career, to give a brief account of Port Royal.

Port Royal, sometimes called *Port Royal des Champs*, was in its beginning a convent about nine miles south of Versailles, attached to the Benedictine order, and founded in 1204. In the course of time, its discipline, like that of many other such establishments, had become greatly relaxed. About the year 1608, Marie-Angelique Arnauld becoming Abbess, reformed its discipline and gave it such fame that many noble ladies began to reside in the neighborhood, to share in its earnest devotions. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Antoine Arnauld, a learned doctor of the Sorbonne, accompanied by three of the famous Lemaistre family, as well as by several other men of learning and purity, took up his residence there. His mother, his sister the Abbess, five other sisters, and six of his nieces were already members of the establishment. The Arnaulds, the Lemaistres, Nicole, and the Abbé de Saint-Cyran, living near the convent, cultivating their little gardens, teaching the young, and composing valuable works, soon won for Port Royal the reputation of being a school of virtue and learning. Racine was one of the pupils of this school of puritans in the bosom of the Church of Rome. Pascal, whose sister and niece were members of the convent, numbered himself as in spirit one of the little fraternity outside its walls, though his work and life were elsewhere.

For many years Port Royal had the highest renown and success as a useful institution. But, long before its arbitrary and cruel destruction in 1710, its troubles began, in the condemnation by the Sorbonne, under the influence of the Jesuits, of Saint-Cyran and then of Arnauld, as adherents of the Jansenist school of religious belief.

Pascal now took the field in defence of Arnauld, producing his famous *Lettres écrites à un Provincial*. The first, second, and third of these letters are devoted to proving the identity of his friend's doctrine with that of St. Augustine. The others, how-

ever, are those which caught the attention of the public and won him the fame of stinging and withering irony which still clings to his name. In these he attacks the system of casuistry expounded by the great Jesuit doctors, and holds the order up to ridicule as masters in sophistry and teachers of immorality. "The Provincial Letters"—I quote from a paper in one of the English reviews—"are, on the whole, the most brilliant collection of controversial letters extant. They have not the rounded finish, the concentration, the red-hot touches of sarcasm, and the brief and occasional bursts of invective darkening into sublimity which distinguish the letters of Junius. Nor have they the profound *asides* of reflection, or the impatient power of passion, or the masses of poetical imagery to be found in Burke's *Letter to a Noble Lord*, and *Letters on a Regicide Peace*; but they excel these and all epistolary writings in dexterity of argument, in power of irony, in light, hurrying, scorching satire, a 'fire running along the ground,' in grace of motion, and in Attic salt and Attic eloquence of style."

Gérusez well remarks that the charm and power of this work of Pascal's, even with the readers of our own time, lie quite apart from the original dispute, that no one cares now about the rights of the discussion on the nature of grace, but that we can all appreciate and enjoy the masterly appeal in behalf of truth against error, which the eloquent genius of Pascal, passing beyond the particular thesis he has set himself to defend, utters in passage after passage of transcendent beauty. As to the justice of all his charges against the Jesuits, it is not my province to decide that question, any more than in the case of his bitter onslaught on the memory of Montaigne as a teacher of skepticism.

Blaise Pascal, born in 1623, was, like his friends, the Arnaulds, from Auvergne. As a mere boy he distinguished himself by his amazing proficiency in



mathematics, and in early youth as an experimenter in physics. His intercourse with the distinguished Jansenist preacher, the Abbé Guillebert, early led him to join the ascetic school of which he later became the ablest defender. The *Provinciales*, as his famous letters are sometimes called, were written under the pseudonym of Louis de Montalte. His other great work, the *Pensées sur la Religion*, was left unfinished; but, even in their incomplete shape, these fragmentary efforts to construct a body of thought strong enough to cope with the arguments of atheists have excited the admiration of every generation of readers. The battering-ram Pascal brings to bear against the stronghold of atheism is framed of negations that confront and crush the negations of human pride. He, the brightest and acutest of men in pure intellectual force and subtlety, communes with himself, pushes his thought back to its utmost bounds, sees and marks the inexorable limitations, and forces his mind to gaze into the impenetrable beyond, until it shrinks back, aghast and appalled at the narrowness of its range and the boundlessness and immensity of what stretches beyond its grasp. It is thus that he abases the human intellect and step by step proves its littleness and the futility of its efforts to penetrate the mystery that surrounds us. Bringing his mathematics to bear upon the matter in and around man, and forcing the imagination to compass what it can of the infinitely great and the infinitely small, he drives proud reason, beaten from all its shelters, to plead to faith for help.

Pascal's wretched health prevented him from grouping these wondrous Sibylline leaves into a harmonious whole, and he died at the early age of thirty-nine, in Paris, in the year 1662.

His friends, those Christian mystics who made up the Port Royal school, deserve some special mention. Antoine Arnauld was one of twenty noble children of a famous lawyer. Jansenist,

heart and soul, he joined Nicole in writing a massive treatise on *La Perpétuité de la Foi*. Afterwards when an exile among Protestant fellow-exiles, he assailed them in his *Apologie des Catholiques*. Nicole was Arnauld's faithful auxiliary. When not compelled by the ardor of his friends to engage in controversy, he pleased his own peaceful nature by composing his *Essais de Morale*. Antoine Lemaistre, son of one of the sisters of Arnauld; his brother, Lemaistre de Sacy, translator of the Bible; Claude Lancelot, one of Racine's instructors; together with De Pontis, Du Fossé, and Fontaine, were all scholarly men, engaged in the production of grammars and text-books on logic, besides their other works.

Between the death of Richelieu and the personal reign of Louis XIV.—that is, during the period of Cardinal Mazarin's struggle with the leaders of the Fronde and the years of his final triumph—no great literary event occurred, besides the publication of Pascal's great controversial work. There was nothing about the court of Anne of Austria to encourage literature, nothing in the nature of Mazarin to evoke genius. Even the great soul of Corneille seemed to shrink, and the works he put forth at this time are not those by which posterity knows him.

What really belong to this period are the interminable romances of Mademoiselle de Scudéri, in which history and passion are alike falsified; and the sonnets and madrigals and abortive epics of an age of artificial taste. But, laughable as the characters and conversations of these long narratives are to readers of our day, Madeleine de Scudéri, holds an important place in the history of literature, as the founder of the heroic romance. It is true, she had fore-runners, but her stories were greatly superior in many ways to theirs, and may be said to have established that class of work as having a just claim to a recognized place in literature.

The pastoral romance of D'urfé was, in the nature of things, succeeded by the heroic. To translations from the old Greek romances and the Spanish was added, in the days of the Queen Mother, Marie de Médici, the *Endymion* of Gombault, who in that strange idyllic romance allegorized the favor with which the Queen-Regent herself looked upon him. After Gombault came Gomberville—or, to give him the benefit of his name and titles in full, Marin Le Roy, Sieur de Gomberville et du Parc-aux-Chevaux—who, between 1621 and 1651, published *La Caritée*, *Poléxandre*, *La Cytheree*, and *Le Jeune Alcidiene*. *Poléxandre* is considered the best.

There was still, however, an air of fairyland about the prose romance. It was Gautier de Costes, Seigneur de La Calprenède, who was to give it more likeness to actual life. He was on duty at court as a young guardsman when the public had the first hint of his story-telling powers. It was in the time of Anne of Austria, and this queen complaining that her maids of honor were tardy in their service, one of them excused herself and companions by saying that there was in the first hall a gentleman whom one could never tire of listening to. The queen had La Calprenède summoned to her presence, and prayed him to tell her one of those tales he told so well. The young Gascon promptly complied with the request, the Queen was delighted, and a pension was at once given him.

He who could please a queen naturally felt that it would be easy for him to please the public. Accordingly he set to work, and it was not long before his teeming brain poured forth ten volumes of a romance, the scene of which is laid in Persia during the time of Alexander. This is his *Cassandre*. There is no local color, no historic reality, but we are treated to a long series of romantic loves, tremendous combats, magnificent tourneys, the carrying-off of princesses by ardent but respectful lovers,

and all manner of exciting incidents. The characters, it is true, are not people of the time of Alexander, but they are real for all that, and they talk well. La Calprenède wrote another, the *Cléopâtre*, which occupied twelve volumes; and he began a *Pharamond*, of which he printed only seven volumes. Pierre de Vaumorière, the author of the *Grand Scipion*, afterwards finished it with five more volumes.

Madeleine de Scudéri came to Paris with her brave but amusingly boastful brother, George, in 1630. She, though more sensible than he, was also vain of a supposed family grandeur in the past. Demogeot remarks: "She used always to say, 'Since the downfall of our house';—you would have said that she was speaking of the overthrow of the Greek Empire. She was tall, thin, and dark, with a very long face. Madame Cornuel used to say that Providence had made that girl sweat ink, since she was to spread so much of it on paper. For a long time her brother kept up the most amusingly jealous practices about her. Sometimes he shut her up entirely, and would suffer no one to see her. She was not able to see whom she wished even when forty years old. Madeleine took all this treatment with a good grace. Perhaps she was flattered by it."

This brother and sister were really very much attached to each other, and it was to the advantage of their literary work that they were evidently always living a romance in imagination before they undertook to write one. Madeleine herself wrote under cover of her brother's name. George was a dramatic author. Madeleine published *Ibrahim*, her first book, in 1635. It was no advance on Gomberville, and did not reach the merit of La Calprenède. But her study of the refined manners and lofty thought of the Hôtel Rambouillet, to which she was admitted, gave her something real to paint. In her *Artamène, ou le grand Cyrus* and

*Clélie*, under the disguise of Persians and Romans, she, to their great delight, painted the haunters of the *ruelles* of "Cléomire," as she styled the brilliant Marquise in the seventh volume of the *Cyrus*.

If Madame de Sévigné reproached herself, and to no purpose too, for pouring over La Calprenède's books, Madeleine de Scudéri's were to waste far more time. They became the rage everywhere. In England, we find old Samuel Pepys scolding his wife and grumbling at her in his secret diary for her devotion to them. There is, in truth, much in the writings of this dark-skinned old maid, of which a woman even in this age might well be proud. To us, indeed, her stories are tiresome, prolix, unnatural. But, besides her admirable portraiture of the choicest society of her own time, she has some noble passages on the true place of woman in society, some just and judicious reflections that have their value even now. Her style, too, is flexible and flowing, with a grace and delicacy about it from time to time which mark the woman to whose ears the easy conversation of the Rambouillet circle was familiar.

Chapelain's farcical epic, *La Pucelle*, I have already mentioned in passing. Another epic of the sort that "neither gods nor men can abide," was the *Clovis* of Desmarets, Richelieu's favorite. Another was the *Moïse sauvé* of Saint-Amant, who, however, had some merit. Another was the *Saint Louis* of the Père Lemoyne, like the others full of passages marked by wretched taste.

Amid the light literature of burlesque verse, slashing lampoons, and bitter satires, provoked by the war of the Fronde, were the letters of the doctor Guy-Patin against Cardinal Mazarin, which are still of some value as unconscious contributions to contemporary history, as they were written solely for private eyes. Mazarin, who did not concern himself for literature, had but one defender among literary men—a man who did not like to

think with other men. This was Cyrano de Bergerac. In his *Lettre aux frondeurs*, he makes an especial butt of Paul Scarron, the burlesque assailant of Mazarin.

Poor Scarron, with his deformed and suffering body—travesty was natural to him. The *Énéide travestie* is not a great work, in any sense of the word, but there is some fun in it. The trouble is that one grows very tired of reading long in a caricature spun out to so inordinate a length. But Scarron does better work in his *Roman comique* and his *Nouvelles*. His comedies also were amusing, and the young King enjoyed them so much that he had one of them, *L'Héritier ridicule*, performed three times in one day. It was the widow of this poor old pain-tortured merry-maker for the young prince, Françoise d'Aubigné, who was to be in after days the secretly wedded wife and the nurse of the worn-out King, under the name of Madame de Maintenon.

But, before we begin with Louis XIV. and Molière, the special glory of his age, a few words must be said of Mazarin's solitary defender, the fore-runner of Molière, Fontenelle, and Voltaire, and a great admirer of the philosopher Des Cartes.

Savinien Cyrano de Bergerac, one of those big Gascons, to whom France has owed some of its most characteristic types of wit, was born in the same year with Molière, 1620. From his single comedy, *Le Pedant Joue*, Molière, who had been his schoolmate and friend, borrowed largely when he came to write *Les Fourberies de Scapin*. It was the earliest prose-comedy in the language, and has at least the merits of great exuberance of mirth and much lively action. Had Bergerac not died at the age of thirty-five, he might have given the literature another writer of comedy, not perhaps worthy to be placed beside Molière, but at all events ranking just below him. He had previously written his single tragedy, *La Mort d'Agrip-*

pine, in which the "unities" are very carefully observed. His really great works, however, were his *Histoire comique des Estats et Empires de la Lune*, and his *Estats et Empires du Soleil*, both of which were in 1687 translated into English by A. Lovell, and are said to have influenced Swift in his production of *Gulliver's Travels*. These really able and most entertaining satires are not, however, so cynical as those of Swift.

De Bergerac's life was even better than his books; for, though wild and dissipated at his first coming to Paris, and engaged because of his great strength and courage in numerous duels—never, however, as principal, the seconds in those days fighting for their principals along with them—he became before his death a thoroughly noble and unselfish character. He served also in the army, as well as in duels for his friends, was shot through the body at the siege of Mousson, and at that of Arras was pierced in the neck. Indeed, he died from the results of his wounds. His friend and old school-mate, Le Bret, published his works after his death, prefixing a sketch of his career. De Bergerac died in 1655.

Two years after his birth, appeared a comic romance, which deserves some mention. This was the *Histoire comique de Francion*, a book immensely popular in its day. The author was Charles Sorel, Sieur de Sauvigny, a fast friend of the satirical Doctor Guy-Patin, Mazarin's inveterate enemy. His book was a strong protest against the affectations and the "King Cambyse's vein" of the *précieuse* school of writers. In 1628, when the *Astrée* was at the height of its popularity, he returned to the charge with a clever and piquant parody of that romance, entitled the *Berger extravagant*. Later still, when the *Grand Cyrus* appeared, full of careful portraiture of the great people of the court and the frequenters of Madame de Rambouillet's *ruelles*, Sorel put forth his *Description de l'île des*

*portraitures*, making fun of the passion for sketching pen-and-ink portraits which had seized the *grandeues* and their imitators.

The personal reign of Louis XIV. begins with Mazarin's death in 1661. Before that event, Corneille's greatest works had been produced and the French drama was an established fact. Pascal had put forth his masterpiece of irony and of acute reasoning. D'Urfé, Gombault, Gomberville, La Calprenède and Madeleine Scudéri had inaugurated imaginative fiction. Sorel, De Bergerac and Scarron had presented life and manners as looked at from the comic and satirical side. Madame de Rambouillet and her friends had purified conversation, and elevated the tone of society, besides cultivating in the higher circles a taste for literary skill. France, under the rule of Richelieu, and to some extent even under that of Mazarin, was preparing for the days of peace and courtly leisure which under the Great King were to shine with more than ordinary brightness in many forms of literature.

The Memoirs which belong to the time of Richelieu, are those of Lavieuville, of Henri de Rohan, of the *maréchal d'Estrés*, of Pont-Chartrain, of Déagent, of Bassompierre (who wrote his in the Bastille), of Monglat, of Conrart and of the Cardinal himself.



## VIII.

## MOLIÈRE.

MOLIÈRE is the great master of comedy for modern literature, as Aristophanes was for the ancient. He is more than this: he is more purely a comic writer than any other great master in the history of literature. For, there are flashes of exquisite poetry in Aristophanes, while in Molière all is pure comedy. His business is to make you laugh, and he does it. There are other writers, both of the ancient and the modern world, whose works are purely comic, Plautus and Terence in Latin, Goldoni in Italian, Beaumarchais in French, Sheridan in English; but Molière excels them all in the power of producing laughter.

“Of all the French dramatists,” says Bulwer-Lytton, “he is the only one whose genius is as conspicuous to foreign nations as it is to his own. Like Shakespeare, he is for all time and for all races. A piercing observer of the society around him, he selects from that society types the least socially conventional. His very men of fashion are never out of fashion. Where most he excels all that is left to us of the comedy of the ancients is where his invention most escapes from its influence, and reveals those truths of a poetry almost tragic, which lie half in light, half in shadow, on the serious side of humor. Here, the comedy of the *Misanthrope* is without a rival as to conception of character and delicacy of treatment, though in point of dramatic construction and vigor of style the *Tartuffe* has been held to surpass it, ‘The exposition of *Tartuffe*,’ says Goethe, ‘is without its equal; it is the grandest and best of its kind;’”

But, without lingering to trace generalities, let us sketch as rapidly as possible the career of this great

literary artist and unfold, as we go, the methods of his work and the qualities it exhibits.

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, whom the world knows as Molière, was born in Paris, on the 15th January, 1622. His father was an upholsterer, and the son was brought up with the view of succeeding him in the business. His grandfather, however, had a great fondness for the theatre, and used to take him often to see the play. He soon grew into a passion for studies of a more intellectual order than those needed to qualify him for carrying on his father's business. Aided by the support of his grandfather, he gained permission from his father to devote himself to such studies at the College of Clermont, superintended by the Jesuits. Here he not only received a scholarly education, but formed associations of great value to him in after life. Among his schoolfellows and warm friends was the Prince Armand de Conti, brother of the great Condé. By the intervention of Chapelle, his attached friend, he was also able to take lessons from the philosopher Gassendi. The teachings of Gassendi bore fruit in two directions. We find traces of Gassendi's instructions in the *Femmes Savantes* and elsewhere among the plays of Molière, while a more immediate result of this philosopher's influence was Molière's undertaking to translate Lucretius, which he did partly in verse and partly in prose. This manuscript has, however, been lost. Among other schoolmates of Molière were Bernier the traveler, Hesnault the poet and satirist of the minister Colbert, and Cyrano de Bergerac the fore-runner of Swift in the character of Gulliver.

Molière's first employment on leaving college was the place his father had held of *valet-de-chambre-tapissier* to the king. In virtue of this office he followed the court to Narbonne. But this position was so distasteful to him, that he turned away from it to the study of the law. His old passion for the theatre, however, drew him away

from the bar, and in 1645 he is to be found in Paris at the head of a troop of actors, of whom he soon formed a permanent company.

A story is told of his first teacher's coming to dissuade him from the life of an actor, and of Molière's so eloquently exalting that profession in his defence of it as to induce the old man to join his company and play those parts called *les pères nobles*.

His friend, the Prince de Conti, also tried to dissuade him, offering him a place at court, but he pleaded with him in vain. His vocation emphatically called him. In going upon the stage, the young comedian abandoned his paternal name of Poquelin and adopted that of Molière. So, in a later age, did young Arouet take the surname of Voltaire.

Performing at first in the faubourgs of Paris, and then in the provinces, his company led the life of strolling players; nor is anything known of the plays produced in those early days by Molière, beyond the names of some of them. For twelve years, only an occasional glimpse can be caught of him in the records of the time. During all this time of preliminary training, besides what his sharp eye caught of men and manners, he must have read much. For, his works show a thorough knowledge of Plautus and Terence and of the Italian and Spanish comedies.

But, at last, his old schoolfellow, Prince Armand de Conti, sent for him to give representations at the palace. The king does not seem to have been present on the first occasion; and Molière's players had been patronized for some time by the Prince de Conti, the Duc d'Epéron, and Philippe d'Orléans, before Louis XIV. perceived the merit of the young comedian. The performance of the *Docteur Amonreux* took the monarch's fancy, and he authorized Molière to establish his company in Paris and to perform at the *Théâtre du Petit-Bourbon*, alternately with the Italian comedians.

Molière had meanwhile been going through some of those love-experiences which he has so largely painted in his plays. Like Goldoni, he had some unfortunate haps in his affairs of the heart, and, like him, he drew on his own personal experience for some of the situations in his comedies. His first passion, which was for an actress named Madeleine Béjart, gave way to a deep and unreturned devotion to another member of his company, Mademoiselle Duparc, a heartless beauty, a worshiper of rank, and a despiser of the comedian's humble social position. This scorn of one to whom he had poured out his whole heart filled Molière with profound sadness.

His solace was the devoted friendship of Mademoiselle de Brie, who loved him with the same hopeless passion with which he had been inspired by Mademoiselle Duparc. She became, under his teaching and with the motive of pleasing him and doing his genius honor, an accomplished actress and a great favorite with the public. She is described as "tall, slender, and graceful; noble in her carriage, and natural in all her attitudes, with something particularly delicate in her face and features, which rendered her most fitting for the part of an *ingénue*. Her eyes possessed a peculiar charm, derived from their mingled expression of candor and tenderness. She was more intelligent than witty, and had not a shadow of coquetry."

She had the quickness to perceive the deep melancholy which oppressed Molière under his calm exterior, won him over to confide in her, and consoled him so sweetly that in process of time he was wholly cured of his passion for Mademoiselle Duparc. More than this—he had yielded to the charm of his sweet consoler, and was now in love with her. For several years they were very happy in their mutual love, though for some unknown reason they did not marry; and, in the end, Molière's heart was won away from her by

Armande Béjart, a younger sister of that Madeleine Béjart for whom Molière had felt so warm a passion before.

This attractive but worthless coquette, witty and gifted as an actress, completely stole away the dramatist's heart. Mademoiselle de Brie, seeing his total subjection to the charms of the younger woman, sadly resigned herself to the painful separation. Molière, at the age of forty-one, married the young girl, more than twenty years younger than himself. Mademoiselle de Brie continued to be his faithful friend, and after his death it was her greatest pleasure to play those parts he had created for her. She kept her youthful appearance to the last, and on one occasion when at sixty she thought it unfitting for her to play the part of a girl of sixteen and gave up to another the part of Agnès in the *École des Femmes*, the audience insisted so loudly on her resuming it that the manager was forced to send for her.

It would have been well for Molière had he remained faithful to this faithful woman. His infatuation was punished by the most shameless infidelity on the part of the frail creature whom he had so foolishly married. As an actress she brought all the unprincipled gallants of the court to her feet. About three years after the marriage, a violent quarrel ended in their separation for some six or seven years. During all this time they met constantly in the theatre, playing in the same pieces.

Some of his best plays—many of them founded on the misfortunes of husbands—were produced at this time. In the *Misanthrope*, which was especially a revelation of his own troubles, Armande played *Celimène*, Mademoiselle de Brie, *Eliante*, and Molière, *Alceste*. It is said that one night *Eliante* was so captivating that the dramatist quite forgot his griefs as a betrayed husband in the return of his old tenderness for the first love. His health failing for a time, Mademoiselle de Brie

watched over him with all the devotion his wife ought to have shown. But a piece of double treachery destroyed the small share of happiness Molière was now enjoying.

Baron, the finest actor of his day, brought up by Molière and hitherto hated and persecuted by Armande, while acting the part of Cupid in the ballet of *Psyché*, produced conjointly by Molière and Corneille, looked so handsome that he changed Psyché's sentiments from hatred to love. Forgetting the gratitude he owed to Molière, Baron returned this sudden passion. What was worse, the worthless wife was so lovely a Psyché, that Molière sank once more under her spells. They were reconciled; but Molière was soon forced to admit her utter worthlessness, and was more unhappy than ever. His health declined, and soon gave way altogether.

While these troubles of the heart were going on, works of wonderful variety and unrivaled humor were pouring from his prolific brain. *L'Etourdi* and *Le Dépit Amoureux* he wrote during the five years of his happy life with Mademoiselle de Brie, before his marriage. Then came *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, produced to satirize the absurdities and affectations of those who were imitating the literary coterie that gathered at the Hôtel Rambouillet.

This was caught at directly as heralding the coming of a new era in comedy. At its first representation, an old man cried: "*Courage, Molière! voilà la véritable comédie!*" Ménage, the critic, said to Chapelain, the poet, as they were going out of the theatre together: "Henceforth (as St. Remi said to Clovis) we must burn what we have worshiped and worship what we have burned." This was in 1659. The next year, appeared *Sganarelle*, and, the next, *L'École des Maris*, partly founded on the *Adelphi* of Terence, with *Don Garcie de Navarre* and *Les Fâcheux*.

After his marriage he wrote *L'École des Femmes*

and *La Critique de l'école des Femmes*. Then came the *Impromptu de Versailles*, *Le Mariage Forcé*, and *La Princesse d'Elide*. It was in this last piece that his wife captivated the courtiers and brought dishonor upon her husband. Between 1665 and 1672, he produced *Don Juan ou le Festin de Pierre*, *L'Amour Médecin*, *Le Misanthrope*, *Le Médecin malgré lui*, *Mélicerte*, *Le Sicilian ou l'Amour Peintre*, *Tartuffe*, *Amphitryon*, *Les Amans Magnifiques*, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, and *Psyché*.

*Tartuffe*, his masterpiece in the opinion of most critics, was written in 1664, but was not played publicly until 1669, as its performance was prohibited, the Jesuits making strenuous efforts to prevent its representation. It proved a grand success when brought at last before the public. "The truth, the variety, the contrast of the characters, the exquisite art shown in the management of the incidents, the abundance of the sentiments, and the wonderful alternations of feeling—laughter, anger, indignation, tenderness, make this," says one of his critics, "truly a masterpiece."

"*Tartuffe*," says Bulwer-Lytton, "is not a comic character—he is almost tragic, for he creates terror; the interest he gives to the play is, in our vague consciousness of a power, intense, secret, and unscrupulous." Marmontel calls attention to the fact that "not one of the principal personages in the *Tartuffe* is comic in himself. They all become comic by their opposition."

In 1672 Molière produced *Les Femmes Savantes*. The *Académie Française* now offered him a chair in that learned body, on condition that he would no longer appear as an actor. He declined, although Boileau and his other friends urged him to accept. "The Academy," said he to Boileau, "is rich enough. It has Corneille, Racine, yourself, and many other great writers. I am but a comedian, and I will not insult a profession I like, however

humble it may be, by abandoning it after having followed it for twenty-five years. My honor will not allow me to do so."

The truth was, he felt himself near his end, and had probably the true workman's wish to die at his work. He wrote but two other plays, *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas* and the *Malade Imaginaire*; the most popular of all his pieces, this last. It was written in February, 1673. On the 17th day of the month, while playing the part of Argan in the fourth representation of the play, and while pronouncing the *juro* in the last scene, he burst a blood-vessel. Baron took him home; and, before his wife, whom he incessantly called for, could be brought to his bedside, he died.

As he died in a state of excommunication, the curé of St. Eustache refused him Christian burial. His widow applied to the Archbishop of Paris, and, on his refusal, to the King; but the selfishness and superstition of that monarch made him receive her with marked coldness, though Molière while alive and able to amuse had been so great a favorite with him. Still, he wrote to the Archbishop, desiring him to permit burial of some sort in consecrated ground. "It was decided that a *handful of earth* should be granted, but that the body should be carried immediately to the burying ground, and not remain in the church. On the 21st of February, accordingly, the coffin was transported at night, by two ecclesiastics, to the cemetery of St. Joseph in the Rue Montmartre, followed by more than two hundred persons, each carrying a torch." In 1792, his remains were removed, and again in 1817. They were placed then in Père-la-Chaise, after having received the honors of high mass in the church of St. Germain des Près.

His plays may be divided into four groups; first, the pieces with music and dancing interspersed among the parts, pastorals or masques like those of Ben Jonson; secondly, farces and pasquinades;



thirdly, comedies of the simpler type; and fourthly, the more complex comedies, where ridicule takes the form of satire rather than that of caricature.

The striking features of Molière's genius, the more salient qualities of his art, are the merriment that oozes at every pore, as it were, from his intellectually joyous nature, the fertility of invention he displays, his variety of situations, his facility of production, his ease, grace, and harmony of versification, and his readiness to catch at every fresh incident or suggested character. An instance of this mercurial quickness is given in the history of that fine satirical comedy, *Les Fâcheux*;—

“At the first representation the scene of the *chasseur* was wanting. After the performance, Louis XIV., addressing himself to Molière and pointing with his finger to Monsieur de Soyecourt, the *Grand Veneur*, said, ‘There is an original you have not yet copied.’ The next day the incomparable scene of Eraste and Dorante was added to the piece; and it is amusing enough that Monsieur de Soyecourt himself should have been the very person to furnish Molière with all the technical terms so skilfully employed by him in that dialogue.”

The pastoral of *Mélicerte* is a fragment—Molière being hurried by the impatience of the King, and never finishing it. Had it been completed, it would have taken high rank as a piece in the manner of Theocritus, of Tasso in his *Aminta*, and of Guarini in his *Pastor Fido*.

The farces are drawn mainly in motive and manner from the Italian and Spanish dramatic literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which the amusing and clever valets play so prominent a part. Such pieces are *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas*, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, *Le Médecin Malgré lui*, *George Dandin*, *Le Sicilien*, *L'Amour Médecin*, *Le Mariage Forcé*, *Sganarelle*, and *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. The Harlequin and Pantaloon

of the Italian stage, representing impudent cleverness and stupid credulity, recur again and again in these pieces, and by their constant contrast give rise to ludicrous scenes and awaken laughter in the audience. As in the case of the *Arlecchino* and the *Pantaleone*, the same names are used for the same types of character in different plays and different situations. Molière's names for them are generally Mascarille and Sganarelle, though occasionally the tricky valet bears a different name, as in the case of Scapin.

These characters were borrowed, though in the hands of Molière they grew into creations in which comic wit by the force of a rich imagination allied itself with the very poetry of merriment. But in his soubrettes Molière was wholly original. The clear, sharp wit of the French woman, so much insisted on by Taine, in his contest between the English and the French feminine character, suggested to the great comic artist this expansion of the comic field. He was the first to put on the stage this type, and to this day the name of *Les Servantes de Molière* is the technical term for this class of stage-characters. Keen perception, rough matter-of-fact common-sense, hard-headed directness, and a simplicity in no way related to stupidity, are their traits. Such is Nicole, the faithful servant of Monsieur Jourdain.

Of the comedies proper, the *École des Maris*, the *École des Femmes*, the *Étourdi*, the *Avare*, *Don Garcie de Navarre*, the *Dépit Amoureux*, and the *Malade Imaginaire* may be named as the chief. In these we generally find his Mascarille and Sganarelle still figuring, but it is as wholly subordinate characters. The sensible *servante* is in them all, under various names. Another character appears, he who is styled by the French the *Raisonneur*, and who represents the judgment of the intelligent and cultivated part of the community. In the *École des Maris*, Ariste has this part to represent;

in the *École des Femmes*, Chrysalde; in the *Malade Imaginaire*, Béralde.

But it is in the complex comedies, as I have ventured to call them, that Molière reaches his highest excellence. In *Don Juan*, *Les Femmes Savantes*, *Le Tartuffe*, and *Le Misanthrope*, we find him exalting comedy into a philosophy of human nature, a philosophy that laughs only because it holds it to be wiser to laugh than to weep, but which looks too profoundly into the human heart not to see the darker side of its folly. The slighter characters that people his other pieces pass out of sight or make but a little show in these higher manifestations of his now mature genius. For the first time characters of a really complex structure take their places on the stage, creations such as Don Juan, the abhorrer of cant, pushed by his climax of infamy into the very gulf of hypocrisy he had always scoffed at;—such as Tartuffe, the serpent-like hypocrite of hypocrites;—such as Alceste, the Misanthrope, whose resentment against his fellowmen springs from the revolt of an enthusiastic, generous, and truthful spirit against the hollowness of society around him.

Molière's style, always clear and direct, rises with the strongly conceived characters and the energetic movement of the plot in these plays. He writes poetry both tender and strong in almost every line. It is, however, the poetry of reasoned sentiment, not the instinctive lyrical burst of song into which Aristophanes rises so naturally.

Penetrating into the basis of his genius by studying him in these plays where he is at his best, we may confidently say that a warm and loving heart, enlightened by sound judgment and working in the interests of truth through the form of comedy, is the power that gives unity and vitality to Molière's productions. There is, of course, much more in his genius than this,—an exquisite sense of the ludicrous, wonderful powers of observation,

a fine perception of the proprieties of social life, the large miscellaneous information which seems to be a special gift with great poets, tact in the selection of harmonious traits and effective contrasts, the enthusiasm of the satirist, timed and moderated by the judgment of one who knew well king, court, and people, and many other qualities of the master in his art. It took many splendid qualities to make a Molière, but at the bottom of them all and rising through them all was the good heart.

## IX.

### RACINE.

CORNEILLE had taken Roman stories for his subjects and Latin literature for inspiration. Racine was a good Greek scholar, and went to the higher literature for models. Corneille, influenced partly by the tone of the Spanish drama, which he studied early in his career and to which he owed the conception of his *Cid*, introduced into French dramatic literature that grand and stately declamation which is its main characteristic. Racine kept up this tradition, but gave to his verse greater harmony and grace. There is a singularly close resemblance between the relation borne by Racine to Corneille and that borne by Pope to Dryden, even though Pope utterly lacked the dramatic element. Pope, like Racine, was more polished and "correct." Dryden, like Corneille, had more native force and vigor. The resemblance is borne out by the further facts, that Dryden drew much of his dramatic inspiration from the Spanish literature; and that Dryden translated Virgil, while Pope selected Homer for his great experiment in translation. They ought indeed to have exchanged their parts, for the genius of Corneille and of Dryden had far more affinity with the glowing energy of the Hellenic mind than with the cold and orderly movement of the Roman.

So much for the general place which Racine occupies in French literature. Let us now take a rapid survey of his life and works.

Jean Racine was born at Ferté Milon, on the 21st December, 1639, of a respectable family. Losing both his parents at the age of four, sent by

his maternal grandfather to the college of Beauvais, going to Port Royal at the age of sixteen and remaining there three years, he finished his training for life at the collège d'Harcourt.

His characteristic tendencies showed themselves first during his residence at Port Royal, the famous seat of mysticism in France. His grandmother and his aunt Agnes were recluses there, and the youth was much beloved by the austere heads of that singular institution, for he was a quick and eager student and of an ardent and affectionate disposition. But his passion for poetry and romance greatly shocked those grave masters,—religious zealots as they were. It was all very well so long as he showed that able scholar, Claude Lancelot, his understanding and appreciation of Euripides and Sophocles. But, when he was caught devouring Bishop Heliodorus's Byzantine romance, *The Loves of Theagenes and Chariclea*, the worthy sacristan snatched the volume from his hands and threw it into the fire. A second copy underwent the same fate; but the third young Jean brought himself to the ascetic master, saying: "You may put this in the fire too, for now I have it all by heart."

This little story is valuable, as indicating character. It shows the eager bent of his mind toward art, the sweetness of his temper, and the resoluteness of his will. It also indicates the natural revolt of youth and warm blood against the spirit of asceticism. Good men who unhappily lack imagination are still to be found setting their faces against the healthy instincts of nature, under the delusion that joy and sin are nearly related.

His first literary venture, being coupled with the adroitness of the born courtier, was a success. On the marriage of the young king with the Spanish Infanta, he wrote an ode called *La Nymphe de la Seine*, which struck the fancy of Chapelain, favorite poet of the court, who recommended it to the notice of the minister, Colbert. Racine received a purse

of a hundred louis, and afterward a pension of six hundred livres.

But, in spite of this invitation given him by fortune to adopt the career of court-poet, his uncle, who held a high ecclesiastical position at Uzès in Languedoc, put before him such strong inducements to wait for Church-preferment, that he yielded and went to live with his kinsman. Systematic theology, however, proved to the born poet as dry a study, as the ascetic habits of Port Royal had been uncomfortable practice. He returned to Paris. There, with Boileau and La Fontaine already his friends, he began his dramatic career.

His first acted tragedy was *Les Frères Ennemis*, played in 1664. It is founded on that stern story set forth by the great dramatists of Athens in the *Seven Against Thebes* and the *Antigone*, the fatal struggle between Eteocles and Polynikes. But, able as the play was, the representation of hot and furious hatred did not suit well Racine's essentially tender spirit. It was the influence of Corneille which dominated over this first offering to the stage.

His next piece, *Alexandre*, gave too ample evidence of the natural leaning of Racine's mind toward the exhibition of tender passion rather than vehement action. Corneille, to whom he read it before representation, told him: "I judge by this play that your talent is eminently poetic, not dramatic." Even Boileau, his devoted friend and counsellor, did not scruple to criticise severely the transformation of the splendid conqueror into a love-sick and languishing young Frenchman.

About this time his relations with the Church obtained him the presentation to the priory of Epinay; but, his claim being disputed, a lawsuit followed, which he afterward found useful in furnishing material for his comedy of the *Plaideurs*.

Hardly was he free from the entanglements of the law, when he became involved in a quarrel

with the Port Royal community. Sore from a letter of remonstrance on the life he was leading, written him by his aunt, he took offence at a passage in a criticism of the Jansenist of Port Royal, Pierre Nicole, on Desmaret's worthless work on the Apocalypse, in which criticism the composition of novels and plays was discredited as irreligious and prejudicial to morality. Taking Nicole's censure as specially designed for him, so lately rebuked by his Port Royalist aunt, he made a hot and able reply to it. To this Nicole made no retort, but the cudgels were taken up by three others of the Port Royal community. Racine prepared a second letter, but Boileau, his staunch friend, dissuaded him from publishing it, saying: "This letter will do honor to your ability, but not to your heart. You bitterly attack here men of great merit, to whom you owe no little of what you are." Boileau's warm, frank friendship was through life very useful to Racine, and Racine repaid it with unceasing trust and fervent gratitude. He said to Boileau on his death-bed: "I look upon it as a happiness to die before you."

He owed much more to Boileau than this moderating touch of the satirist on his shoulder when he was in the act of charging down upon the instructors of his youth. For Boileau was his able and calm censor and critic, and to his judicious counsel he owed that spirit of careful selection which made his language so pure and at the same time so rich. It is true, there are other charms about Racine which native genius alone could form, but to the constant watchfulness of Boileau over his style was due some share even in that intellectual lucidity, that exquisite delicacy of feeling which the clean style so well expressed.

The first work which exhibited these high qualities and the further gifts of orderly plot, consistent characterization, and general fidelity to the manners of the age portrayed, was the Andromaque,



which appeared in 1667. This was Racine's first marked success, and it was the advent upon the stage of the tragedy founded upon love. Corneille had painted moral grandeur. Racine painted now the heart's alternate transports and agonies, exciting a pathetic interest which moved even more deeply and universally than the lofty themes of the elder dramatist. In the Hermione of this play, that great actress, Mademoiselle Champmeslè for whom he afterwards created the character of Phèdre, made her first appearance.

Racine's next play was suggested by the amusement he had afforded his friends, Boileau, La Fontaine, Chapelle, and Furetière, at an entertainment, by his description of the trial which had put an end to his project of taking holy orders. His recital produced such merriment, that they insisted upon his making a comedy of the incidents he had described.

Thus was produced the *Plaideurs*. The plot of the comedy runs thus: Monsieur Perrin Daudin, a judge in Lower Normandy, is so much in love with his profession that he has condemned his cock to be beheaded for not waking him up one morning early enough, accusing the poor bird of having been bribed to this act of negligence. His son, Leander, convinced that he has a veritable craze, persuades the porter, Petit Jean, to keep him confined to the house and to let no law-pleadings come near him. He escapes, however, out of the window, but is secured again by his son, his secretary, and Petit Jean; and Leander now consults with the secretary about delivering a letter in disguise to Isabelle, daughter to Chicaneau, a client as crazy as the judge. At this point Chicaneau enters, and is soon joined by the Countess Pimbesche. Both are anxious to consult the judge. The lady is very litigious, has been at law for thirty years, and yet complains that there now remain to her only four or five trifling cases, one against her husband, one against her

father, one against her children. She has ample provision made for her, "but," she asks, "what is life without Law?" Chicaneau also tells his grievances, beginning with the rolling of an ass's colt in his meadow fifteen or twenty years back. Suit upon suit, appeal upon appeal, had followed, until on his finally losing his cause, he was condemned to pay six thousand francs. They try to console each other, but end in a quarrel and mutual insults, which give rise to a new law-suit.

Meanwhile Leander's emissary, in the disguise of a sheriff's officer, has contrived to deliver the note to Isabelle. Her father, coming in as she is reading it, asks what it is. She tears it up, saying it is a summons. The messenger behaves so as to get a beating from old Chicaneau, and begs him to go on with further injuries, as the action he will be able to bring will save him and his four small children from want for the rest of their lives. Chicaneau, alarmed, gets his daughter to write an apology, which she words so as to make it a full consent to her marriage with Leander.

Judge Daudin, shut up in the house, now appears on the roof, and from that elevated position holds a consultation with his clients in the street. Removed from the house-roof, he holds forth to his audience through the grating of his cellar. At last, his son puts before him a case of a thoroughly domestic character. The dog, Citron, has abstracted a capon. Petit Jean prosecutes the case, the secretary defends, Leander plays audience. Petit Jean, not skilled in legal technicalities, although a prompter has on that account been assigned him, constantly makes blunders. The secretary's pleading wanders off to Aristotle, Pythagoras, the Corinthians, and finally to the creation of the world. "Ah!" cries the poor judge, who has in vain been trying to bring him to the point, "pass on to the Deluge." But the pleader sticks fast to the beginning of things, and at last the judge falls asleep.

His son, seeing him after a time waking up, urges him to pass sentence, on which he cries out: "To the galleys with him!" "What! a dog to the galleys?" "Oh!" cries the judge, "he has filled my head with the chaos he has been describing. Finish the pleading." The defendant's counsel now presents a couple of pups to the court, pleading their pitiful condition if made orphans. The judge's indecision is broken in upon presently by the entrance of the fair Isabelle and her father. The parties are all brought to consent to the match between Isabelle and Leander, the judge being made well content with a promise of many causes to be tried at home, only he insists that in future the speeches of counsel must not be so long.

Much of the fun of this piece lay in the mimicry of prominent advocates of the day and of a judge who was given to exercising his profession in his own family. The king was greatly amused by this comedy; and Molière, who was not at this time on good terms with Racine, gave it emphatic praise.

Racine's next piece, although comparatively a failure, had an important effect on the conduct of his king. Louis had been in the habit of engaging personally in the court-ballets, of which he was very fond. But, as Nero, in this new tragedy of Racine's, the Britannicus, is censured for making himself "a spectacle to the Romans," the king renounced the practice forever.

Bérénice was Racine's next play. It is said to have been written at the request of Henrietta, the English princess, sister to Charles II. and wife to Louis XIV.'s brother, her motive being a desire to see represented the sorrows of the Emperor Titus and of Berenice, the Jewish princess whom he loved and would have married but for the emphatic disapprobation of the Roman people. These love-sorrows she is said to have felt a deep sympathy for, regarding her own case and Louis's as somewhat similar to Titus and Berenice's.

Unfortunately, the theme was such that there could be no action in the play, none of that movement toward a definite end which makes the true drama. Chapelle, Racine's friend, being urged by him to give his opinion frankly, replied with the couplet:

" Marion pleure, Marion crie,  
Marion veut qu'on la marie."

Even the king made fun of it. Meeting the court physician on coming out of the theatre, after the play was over, he said to him gravely: "I have just been on the point of sending for you to attend a princess who wanted to die, but did not know how to set about it."

After *Bérénice* came *Bajazet*, acted in 1672, and *Mithridate*, acted in 1673. The latter was a great success, and has this historical souvenir connected with it, that Charles XII. of Sweden pored over it many hours in his dreary days at Bender, no other play being so great a favorite with him.

The next year, 1674, Racine produced his *Iphigénie*, in which Mademoiselle Champmeslé, enacting the heroine, brought many tears from the eyes of the courtiers. This great actress having besought Racine to create for her a part in which she could portray all the passions, he wrote and brought out in 1677 the greatest of all his plays, the *Phèdre*.

As in *Iphigénie*, he had purposely departed from the plot of his master, Euripides, so in *Phèdre*, he depicts a character very different from the guilty Phædra of the Greek dramatist. This character, always a grand one on the French stage, whether illustrated by a Rachel or by a Sara Bernhardt, and indeed bearing the same relation to other parts in French dramatic literature that Hamlet does to others in English, deserves special study. Phædra, in Euripides, is intended to be hateful, an object of horror: the whole interest of the audience is to be

concentrated on Hippolytus. She comes on the stage to die; she has no vestige of hope; she looks ghastly and frightful; possessed and cursed by Aphrodite, she is really a madwoman; she has, however, in her frenzy, the cunning of madness; and, with the horrible hate that grows out of accursed and ungratified love, she dies leaving a lie behind her—the accusation of her step-son to his father. The Greek Phædra on the modern stage would have made a poor acting part, because calling forth no atom of sympathy, but only loathing and disgust.

Racine changed the situation and the character. In his hands, Phèdre becomes a woman, humanized from the monster that Euripides painted; she excites our sympathy, moves our deep compassion, softens horror into pity. Infirmity of will is the keynote to her character; desperate pressure of circumstance breaks through the guards of conscience and duty, and she gives way to crime through weakness to resist temptation. The Greek Phædra is a depraved wretch or a stark madwoman. The French Phèdre is a poor weak and sinful woman, struggling pitifully against the evil she is yet not strong enough to resist.

Noble as this play is, it did not at once take possession of the stage. A miserable conspiracy formed by a miserable court clique banished *Phèdre* from the stage for a year. Pradon, a hack writer, was induced by Madame Deshoulières (an enemy of both Boileau and Racine), her brother, the Duc de Nevers, and others, to write a play on the same subject. They then hired the chief places in the two theatres for the first five nights, left those in Racine's house vacant, and filled those in the other, so that Pradon's play seemed to be the favorite. This mean trick did not prevent the ultimate success of *Phèdre*; but Racine was disgusted, and never again wrote a play on any but a Biblical subject.

He began to think of joining the Carthusians; but his confessor persuaded him to marry instead. He married a lady with an utter distaste for plays and poetry, but of excellent sense and good humor, pleasing in countenance, and wholly indifferent to wealth or rank. Bulwer-Lytton, who in his own experience had little reason to regard a wife with literary tastes as specially desirable, has this comment on Racine's family life:—

“It has been said that the wife of Racine had so little participation in the artistic life of her spouse, that she had never even read his plays. But, as Racine was tenderly attached to her, and of a nature too sensitive not to have needed some sort of sympathy in those to whom he attached himself, and as, by all accounts, his marriage was a very happy one, so it is fair to presume that the sympathy withheld from his artistic life was maintained in the familiar domestic every-day relationship of his positive existence, and that he did not ask the heart of Madame Racine to beat in unison with his own over the growing beauties of those children whom she was not needed to bring into the world. Why ask her to shed a mother's tears over the fate of *Britannicus*, or to recoil with a mother's horror from the guilt of *Phèdre*? they were no offspring of hers.”

After giving up the theatre, Racine sought a reconciliation with the recluses of Port Royal, and was forgiven his bitter letter. Appointed now with Boileau to be historiographer to the king, he and his friend had to follow that vainglorious campaigner into Flanders, and on this journey Racine's innocence and simplicity about the common things of every-day life was the occasion of much diversion to the courtiers.

Racine's pen had lain idle for twelve years, when Madame de Maintenon induced him to compose a piece for the young damsels of St. Cyr, in which human love should have no part. He wrote his *Esther*, to fulfil the lady's bidding, greatly to the

delight of the court, who beheld in King Assuerus Louis himself, in Vashti Madame de Montespan, in Esther Madame de Maintenon, and in Haman the minister Louvois.

*Athalie* was written for the same young ladies, but Madame de Maintenon changed her mind, and would not have them act it. The play, when printed, at first made little impression. But a gentleman, in redeeming a forfeit when playing with a gay party some games at a château near Paris, was condemned to read the first act of *Athalie* as a penalty, and having, greatly to his own surprise as well as that of his friends, found it impossible to stop until he had read the whole play, spoke so highly of it, that they decided to hear him read it aloud the next day. This resulted in a change of public opinion as to the merits of the piece. Boileau declared it to be Racine's masterpiece, though the author preferred *Phèdre*.

Some lines in this poem on absolute power are thought to have given offence to the king. But his anger did not show itself until on Madame de Maintenon's persuading the poet to draw up a memorial which should enlighten Louis as to the sufferings of his people, the king ceased to notice him or to speak to him. Louis had accustomed his people—and especially those who were much at court—to live on the hope of his smile resting upon them; and poor Racine is supposed to have sunk under the mortification of his master's neglect. He died on the 21st of April, 1699. His wife had borne him seven children, two sons and five daughters.

He was of middle size, with pleasant, frank, and cheerful countenance; was a good father, husband, and friend, and a sincerely pious man; so good a scholar that he is said to have once entertained a company with the *Œdipus Tyrannus* before him in Greek, while he gave it out to them in ready and eloquent French. His only fault was a tendency to

severe and satirical treatment of those who attacked him.

His skill in depicting the tender passions, his grace and purity of style, his facility and the exquisite felicity of his easy-flowing verse, his comparative freedom from that monotonously declamatory rhetoric which disfigures French tragedy, his masterly clearness, furnish reasons enough for the high place which is universally conceded him by his countrymen.



## X.

## UNDER LOUIS XIV.

LA FONTAINE said, "Molière is my man;" and there was indeed the same vein of rich humor in them both, though developed in different directions. They were staunch friends through life, and they lie at this day near each other in Père la Chaise.

Geruzez says of La Fontaine's genius, "it is the flower of Gallic wit with a perfume of antiquity. He recalls Phœdrus and Horace, but he is also a result of Villon and Rabelais. In him we find blended all that is most exquisite in classic antiquity and in the Middle Ages, and that without a trace of effort, so that he reproduces the charm of a double tradition with the air of perfect originality."

Jean de La Fontaine was born at Château-Thierry, in Champagne, in 1621. He was idle in his youth, but became a great reader when he had once discovered his taste for poetry.

Though selfish and immoral, there was a child-like good-nature about his manner which seems to have had a singular charm for many of his most distinguished contemporaries; and Molière, Boileau, Racine, and Fénelon were all fond of him. He died at Paris in 1695.

His earlier works were Tales and Novels in Verse (*Contes et Nouvelles en Vers*). But he is chiefly known by his Select Fables in Verse (*Fables Choies mises en Vers*). The style of La Fontaine is inimitable in its arch simplicity, its merry, childlike malice, its air of cool, sardonic effrontery. His very immoralities seem like the irresponsible pranks of a Puck,

His narrative is limpid in ease and grace, and he enters into the story with such zest as to give it a marvelously lifelike naturalness. His fables are such witty satires on humanity, that they have always been a delight to all ages and classes of readers. Imagine Chaucer, in one of his merry moods, passed by some process of transmigration into the pungent spirit of Heine, and the result of the transfusion would be just such a delicious sub-acid fruit as La Fontaine makes among the dainties of literature.

In treating of the literary splendor of the age of Louis XIV., I have taken the great masters of tragedy and of comedy separately, and first after them, as was just, I have named the great fabulist, whom many French critics consider so unique as to have no true analogue in any other literature. To these must now be added a cluster of writers whose relations to one another were peculiar.

There is the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, whose name calls upon that of Madame de Sévigné and that of Madame de La Fayette. There is also that Paul de Gondi, who became the famous Cardinal de Retz and was the friend of Madame de Sévigné, Corneille, Molière, and Boileau, as well as the author of most valuable and entertaining *Mémoires*. Both La Rochefoucauld and the Cardinal were formed, as thinkers and political writers, by their share in the troubles of the Fronde.

François, Duc de La Rochefoucauld and Prince de Marsillac, was born in 1613. When the tumultuous scenes of the Fronde were over, he gave himself up to literary pursuits, and composed his *Mémoires* and also his better known work, called *Reflections*, or Moral Sentences and Maxims (*Réflexions ou Sentences et Maximes Morales*), a work in which the bitter experiences he had had of human selfishness and duplicity in a period of great disorder and corruption only too strongly pointed his epigrammatic observations. It is to him that we

owe that striking definition of hypocrisy, as "the homage that vice renders to virtue." It is to him, too, unfortunately, that we owe many a pithy maxim of Macchiavellian heartlessness, emphasizing the folly of putting faith in man. He was a keen observer, but he had a wretched world to observe in the days of the Fronde. It was but natural then, that he should take the narrow view of life and trace all the springs of human action to the low motive of self-love. Setting out from this philosophic basis, most of his maxims, though often brilliant, witty, and amusingly tart, are thoroughly cynical.

With all these Macchiavellian spurts of venom against human nature, La Rochefoucauld, according to the testimony of the best among his contemporaries, was in his own character singularly chivalrous, high-minded, and honorable. One of his biographers said of him, "He gave the example of all the virtues of which he would seem to deny the existence." He ridicules bravery as a madness. Yet in more than one hard-fought battle he showed all the splendid courage of his race. He says that men "in the adversity of their best friends always find something that does not displease them," and, again, "we have always sufficient strength to bear the ills of—another." Yet this man, who sneered at friendship, was a devoted friend to those he loved; and of this proclaimer of man's innate selfishness, Madame de Sévigné tells us, that in his last painful illness, he thought more of others than of himself. Cardinal de Retz, in his *Mémoires*, testifies that, in all the relations of private life, he was the honestest man of his age.

This contrast between La Rochefoucauld's character and his writings is worth noting, as a warning to every man to look into his own heart as Montaigne did, as well as into that of his neighbor, for in this instance the hearts into which the brilliant duke looked were far meaner than his own, and

the reflections they caused him to make worked incalculable injury to his country. Voltaire tells us, that the book which most contributed to form the taste of the French nation was these very *Maxims* of La Rochefoucauld; and thousands of observing historical-critics concur in assuring us that this taste for brilliant mockery of man's nature, this spirit of disbelief in virtue, had more to do with bringing on the great Revolution than any other one thing. In that time of horror La Rochefoucauld's descendant perished.

One of La Rochefoucauld's dearest friends was Madame de La Fayette (1623-1693), a woman of charming wit and irreproachable character. Before knowing La Rochefoucauld, she had already written *Zaïde*, a romance of pure imagination. In her later work, *La Princesse de Clèves*, she mingled with the fiction a large share of the life around her. The scene is laid in the time of Henri II., but it is really the court of Louis XIV. that appears under thin disguises. Madame de Montespan is painted in the character of the Duchesse de Valentinois. The Duchesse D'Orléans appears masquerading as the young Queen of Scotland, François II.'s wife. La Fayette is masked as the Prince de Clèves, and La Rochefoucauld as the Duc de Nemours. Guizot says: "This delicate, elegant, and virtuous tale, with its pure and refined style, enchanted the court, which recognized itself at its best and painted under its brightest aspect." The *Princesse de Clèves* had a great success. It was a new order of romance. While the court and characters of Louis XIV. have been transferred to the days of Henri II. and François II., the historical events of the earlier time have been kept unchanged, and there is a tone of truth and nature about the work which gives it a high place as an artistic creation.

Another friend of the brilliant duke's was that Madame de Sévigné, whose letters are the most famous in the world. She was herself famous in

her day, without reference to those letters on which her fame now rests. She was full of charm; lively, tender, sympathetic, witty, good, perfectly natural and unaffected, she kept many friends and made no enemies. One of her critics says of her, that so happy, pure, and sensible was her nature, Ménage and Chapelain could instruct her without making her pedantic, the Hôtel Rambouillet could enrich her code of propriety with maxims of social manners without spoiling her clearness of perception, the friendship of Port Royal could be assured her without her sharing in the austerity of that school, and she could even undergo the slanders of Bussy-Rabutin without losing her fair fame or her good temper. Madame de La Fayette said that her wit really dazzled the eyes. One can well believe even this apparent extravagance, so charmingly does her love of fun bubble up and sparkle as it runs over every here and there in her letters, and her eyes seem to dance with delight as she sketches with felicitous touches some absurd scene that she has witnessed and laughed at merrily. She must have been a refreshing companion, so unquenchable was her gayety, and so buoyant her spirits. In her letters there is endless variety, sparkling wit, animated narrative, arch humor, keen observation, warmth of feeling, force and weight of reflection. She is never tedious; whatever her subject, she is always entertaining.

She was independent, too, and never ceased to let fall thoughts that were little in accordance with the air of that abject court in which despotism had become firmly seated in the person of Louis XIV. Her faithfulness to old ties was shown in her never-concealed attachment to the Arnaulds, her preference for Corneille when Racine had become the popular idol, her constant kindness to Cardinal de Retz. It is from a letter of hers to her daughter in 1672, that we learn how the literary men of the day gathered around the old hero of the Fronde

in spite of his political disgrace. "Corneille," says she, "has read him a piece which will be played shortly, and which recalls the ancients. Molière will read him Saturday his *Trissotrin*, which is a very merry thing. Despréaux [Boileau] will give him his *Lutrin* and his *Art of Poetry*. There is all one can do to please him."

Before we turn to De Retz, it will be well for me to gather in a brief paragraph the principle facts of this gifted woman's life. Marie de Rabutin-Chantal (1626-1696) was born at Paris. She was the only daughter of Celse-Bénigne de Rabutin, Baron du Chantal, and his wife, Marie de Coulanges. Left early an orphan, she was brought up by the abbé de Coulanges, her mother's brother. Ménage taught her Latin, Italian, and Spanish; Chapelain also assisted in training her mind. At eighteen she was married to the Marquis Henri de Sévigné, of an ancient family of Brittany. He was not a good husband in any way, but she was not long troubled with him, as in about seven years after their union he was killed in a duel. She now devoted herself to the education of her son and daughter. When she at last returned to Paris, the most distinguished men of the day paid their court to her; but she steadily declined all offers of marriage. Her affection for her daughter seems to have been her strongest passion. This daughter having married the Comte de Grignan, Governor of Provence, was obliged to part from her mother. It is to this separation that we owe that unrivaled series of letters, which gives us so faithful a picture of court, capital, and provincial life in that remarkable age. The loving mother died of small-pox, while on a visit to her daughter at the Château de Grignan.

At the time Madame de Sévigné wrote that letter in which she related how Corneille, Molière, and Boileau were joining in the effort to entertain the fallen statesman, Cardinal de Retz had given himself up to literary recreations. He had begun those

*Mémoires*, which recount the events and depict the characters of the Fronde.

Paul de Gondi (1614-1679) was not meant by nature for an ecclesiastic. The traditions and rules of a great family forced him into orders, that he might be bishop of Paris in the place of a brother who had died. It was to no purpose that he fought duels, carried off an heiress, conspired against Richelieu; he had to abide by his vocation. But he devoted himself to politics, aspired to be the chief of a party, conducted the intrigues of the Fronde, and had finally to succumb to the growing strength of the monarchy. His *Mémoires* are full of admirable reflections based on his experience in politics. They abound also in finely drawn portraits of the characters of his time.

Having now given some account of the chief literary lights of the age of Louis XIV., I have reached the point where it is fitting to bring forward the great critic of that period, whose satires were to lay down the principles of good taste and to cast ridicule upon the writers who violated them. This was Boileau, who, while his genius bears some resemblance to that of Horace, has on the whole more points of affinity with Pope.

Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux (1636-1711) was born at Paris. He tried law and theology in succession, but finally gave himself up wholly to literature. His works were the *Satires*, the *Epêtres*, the *Art poétique*, and *Lutrin*. In the first, he declared war on all bad writers, and especially covered with ridicule the taste for Spanish emphasis, Italian conceits and plays on words, the sentimental jargon of the *précieuses*, and the buffoonery and license which were defacing literature at the beginning of his career, when Chapelain was still the leading court poet and Scarron the favorite writer of comedy.

Boileau, as a poet, lacks freshness, grace, and joyousness. But he makes up for these deficiencies

by good sense, pure taste, and the propriety, force, and correctness of his style. The *Epistles* are superior to the *Satires*. Their versification is stronger, sweeter, and more flexible. The *Art of Poetry* is based on Horace's work of the same name. It summed up the laws of poetry, and indeed of good writing in general, for that generation, and formed the literary creed of the seventeenth century. It is expressed in easy and elegant verses.

Boileau, less gifted than Corneille, Molière, Racine, and La Fontaine, possessing neither creative imagination nor lyrical enthusiasm, and lacking also deep sensibility, was useful to his more gifted friends in curbing their exuberance and directing their taste. His *Lutrin*, a comic epic in six cantos, may be compared with Pope's similar effort, *The Rape of the Lock*, by many considered the most charming of his poems.

Boileau's letters are also of great value, twenty of them having been addressed to Racine, and all of them giving much information about the literary history of the time. Their chief value, however, consists in the confirmation they furnish of the high character which his contemporaries give of Boileau. We see by these letters, how pure, generous, and high-minded, how impulsive and warm-hearted this keen satirist was. When, on the death of the minister Colbert, orders were given to stop Corneille's pension, Boileau flew to the king, made an earnest remonstrance against the ungenerous course of the government, and threatened to resign his own pension, if Corneille's were not restored. He was just as bold in his denunciation of the persecution directed against the nuns of Port Royal and the noble Arnauld. He helped his friends out of pecuniary embarrassments, reconciled some who had quarreled, gave good advice to Racine, and was on friendly terms with the most opposite parties.

Among those whom Boileau satirized more se-



verely than, in the judgment of some later critics, their faults deserved were Brébeuf and Quinault.

Brébeuf had some ability. His *Pharsale* is still considered the most faithful translation of Lucan's historical epic. His religious poetry, too, is praised by Geruzez. As for Quinault, his rivalry with Racine had something to do with the rigor of Boileau's criticism. His *Astarte* was a tragedy of great merit. His comedies, *Les Rivaux* and *La Mère Coquette*, still hold their place in collections illustrative of French Comedy. His great operas, *Armide*, *Atys*, and others, set to music by Lully, were the productions of a master in that style of dramatic production. His rank, according to modern critics, is just below that of the most eminent dramatists. His skill lies in softening hearts, enchanting the imagination, delighting the ear with the melody of his verse. Voltaire even goes so far as to claim for him a place by the side of the great masters. Brébeuf lived from 1618 to 1661; Quinault, from 1637 to 1688.

A successor to the Countess de La Fayette as romancer and to Molière as dramatist was Jean François Regnard (1655-1709), who traveled extensively in early life. In Italy he met the Eloise whom he celebrates in his novel *La Provençale*. Taken by Algerine pirates, he passed two years in Constantinople as a captive. As a dramatist his rank is very high. His best plays are *Le Joueur*, *Les Folies*, and *Le Légataire universel*. He also wrote an account of his travels.

Another group that helped greatly to give lustre to the age of Louis XIV. was that of the great preachers. The Church at no period of French history showed such splendor of eloquence as in this reign. Churchmen of great intellectual power had before this time found in politics a tempting sphere for activity. But the instinct of monarchical prudence now kept them out of this field, in which Richelieu, Mazarin, and De Retz had so long

displayed their abilities. The result was the transfer of all the ability in the Church to the more legitimate domain of pulpit eloquence. It was largely to this change in the social conditions that France owed the magnificent prose of Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Fénelon, and Massillon. In the order of time, as well as in that of genius, Bossuet holds the first place.

Jacques Bénigne Bossuet (1627-1704) was born at Dijon. Profoundly versed in theology, trained in the philosophy of Des Cartes, disputant against the Protestants, main agent in securing the freedom of the Gallican Church from the aggressions of the Papal See, opponent of Fénelon in the controversy about the Quietists, author of a great number of polemical writings, and of a universal history down to the time of Charlemagne, his life was one of ceaseless activity. His master-pieces, however, were his funeral sermons on the decease of great personages, and these have always been held to be magnificent specimens of pulpit eloquence.

Bourdaloue was of the school of Bossuet, and the abbé Maury said of him that he was one of the finest of Bossuet's works. Louis Bourdaloue (1632-1704) was born at Bourges. Like Bossuet, he was in character sound and true to the core, and his eloquence was such as to make men forget how great had been that of his brilliant predecessor. Madame de Sévigné said that she went to hear him more eagerly than she attended the grand festivals of the court, though she leaned to the school of Port Royal, and Bourdaloue was of the Society of Jesus. Yet he had recourse to none of the means of attraction furnished by impassioned declamation or ornate language. His style was simple and direct. Clear reasoning and perfect order in the arrangement of his thoughts formed his principal charm.

Voltaire styles Bossuet and Fénelon the Eagle and the Swan. In treating of Bossuet, I have already mentioned, in passing, the contest between

the Eagle and the Swan. Let us see what a close observer, whose memoirs were not published until many years after his death, has to tell us of this Swan, and try to seize the secret of his charm :—

“That prelate,” says the Duc de St. Simon, “was a tall thin man, well-made, pale, with a large nose, eyes whose fire and intelligence shot out like a torrent, and a countenance the like of which I have never seen anywhere and which no one who had once seen it could ever forget. In it were gathered all things, and the contraries it expressed were not at war with one another. There was in it gravity and gallantry, seriousness and gaiety ; it had a trace equally of the doctor, the bishop, and the great lord ; what was diffused over it and over his whole person, was refinement, wit, the graces, delicacy, and, above all, nobility. It required an effort to cease gazing upon him. One could not leave him, nor resist him, nor fail to seek him again. It is this gift, so rare and which he had in so high a degree, which kept all his friends so attached to him throughout his life, in spite of his fall, and which, when they were scattered, drew them together again to talk of him, to regret him, long for him, hold themselves more and more attached to him, with the love of the Jews for Jerusalem, and to sigh for his return and hope always, as that unhappy people still expect and sigh for the Messiah.”

Such a picture reveals to us a man of singular loveliness, and is the best answer to the cynical philosophy of the good Duc de La Rochefoucauld.

The longing of Fénelon's friends for his return, of which St. Simon speaks, was never to be gratified. He died in exile from the court, being restricted to the limits of his diocese of Cambrai.

François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651–1715) was born in the château Fénelon, province of Périgord. To beginners in the study of French he is generally well known as the author of *Télémaque*, that classical romance, which he wrote for the instruction of Louis's grandson, the young Duke of

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Burgundy, in the duties of a prince to his people. He was fond of this work of education, and his first publication was a treatise on the Education of Girls.

As to the *Télémaque*, Macaulay has well observed that, low as its place may be in the list of prose epics or of works on politics and morals, it is, when we consider the spirit of the age in which it was written, one of the most original works that have ever appeared.

"No person," Macaulay goes on to say, "will do justice to Fénelon, who does not constantly bear in mind that Telemachus was written in an age and nation in which bold and independent thinkers dared to hear that twenty millions of human beings did not exist for the gratification of one. That work is commonly considered as a school book, very fit for children, because its style is easy and its morality blameless; but unworthy of the attention of statesmen and philosophers. We can distinguish in it, if we are not greatly mistaken, the first faint dawn of a long and splendid day of intellectual light, the dim promise of a great deliverance, the undeveloped germ of the charter and of the code."

Louis himself, at least, seems to have felt instinctively the danger of such sentiments to absolute monarchy, for Fénelon's final fall from court-favor was due to the publication of *Télémaque* from a copy stolen by a servant. Fénelon had outlived the results of his contest with Bossuet about the doctrines of Madame Guyon and her followers, the Quietists. He had submitted to the decision of Rome against him, and the storm had blown over. But the appearance of *Télémaque* roused the jealous king's hottest anger. He looked on the book as a satire on his court. Sesostris was Louis himself; Calypso, Madame de Montespan; Protesilaus, the minister Louvois; Eucharis, Mademoiselle de Fontanges.

Younger than Fénelon, and resembling him some-

what in independence of thought, Massillon comes on the stage of public fame as the immediate successor of Bourdaloue in renown for pulpit-oratory. Bourdaloue, when he heard of his first brilliant efforts, quoted from Scripture the passage: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Jean Baptiste Massillon (1663-1742) was born at Hières. Like Bourdaloue, he aimed to influence his hearers by naturalness of style and impressiveness of manner. Louis XIV. gave a striking criticism of his peculiar power as a preacher, when he said that in hearing other preachers he felt satisfied with them, but in hearing Massillon he felt dissatisfied with himself. Physically as well as mentally he was well qualified for his vocation, having an imposing majesty in his manner, a penetrating voice, and great animation in his delivery when he reached the more impassioned passages of his sermons.

The name of Massillon closes the list of the great preachers of this age. Fénelon did not preach as often as Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and Massillon; but his few sermons were of great merit. There were others, Mascaron, Fléchier, La Rue, and Cheminais, who, beside any less shining examples of pulpit-oratory, would have borne the name and fame of great orators. There were, also, among the Protestants, Claude, Beausobre, and Saurin, whose learning and eloquence were recognized even by their opponents.

Esprit Fléchier (1632-1710), besides his deservedly high reputation as a preacher, merits especial honor for his gentleness to the Protestants, when, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, he used his authority as Bishop of Nismes in the spirit of toleration, conciliation, and charity.

In philosophy, this period produced Malébranche as the successor of Des Cartes, and La Bruyère as its moralist.

Nicolas Malebranche (1631-1715) was born at Paris. His great work was his *De la Recherche de*

*la Vérité*, or The Search after Truth, in which he built up a system of mystic idealism. In his view, God is the place of spirits, as space is the place of bodies; the human soul lives in Him, and from Him draws its life and light, and according to its purity of origin from this source does it see the essence of truth. Whatever may be said of the metaphysics of Malebranche, the critics are agreed in commending his style as precise, luminous, and flexible.

Jean de La Bruyère's fame rests upon a single work, "The Characters of Theophrastus, translated from the Greek, with the Characters or the Morals of this Age" (*Les Caractères de Théophraste, traduits du Grec, avec les Caractères ou les Mœurs de ce Siècle*), in which he gives delicate and subtle delineations of the characters of the men and women of his day. He was born at Dourdan, in Normandy, in 1639, and died in 1696.

The scholars of the period were Baluze, Monfaucon, Mabillon, Tillemont, and Ducange. The historians were Pellisson, author of the *Histoire de Louis XIV.*, Mézerai, author of the *Histoire de France*; Péréfixe, author of the *Histoire de Henri IV.*; Maimbourg, who wrote accounts of the Crusades and of the League; Varillas; Saint-Réal; Daniel; Dorléans; Rapin Thoyras; Vertot; the Comte de Boulainvilliers; and the Abbé Fleury.

It was in this age also, that Pierre Bayle (1647-1706) put forth his remarkable *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*. It had been preceded by Louis Moreri's similar work, and also by Thomas Corneille's *Dictionnaire des Arts et des Sciences*. Bayle had passed from Protestantism to Romanism and then back again to Protestantism; had written many controversial works, mainly in advocacy of the principles of toleration; had become a professor of philosophy in Rotterdam, and had there become involved in controversies with leading Protestant writers, especially with the theologian, Jurieu. He

was an independent thinker, and the uncompromising bigotry of the rival Churches with which he had to deal led him to skepticism. His style is clear, but he indulges in endless digressions. His Dictionary, being proscribed in Holland and France, naturally obtained a wide circulation in both countries. It has had a great influence on the literature and philosophy of Europe. Bayle's private character was excellent.

During the latter years of this reign, the Duc de Saint-Simon was secretly writing his *Mémoires*. But, as he continued his observations into the next reign, the consideration of them will be more fittingly taken up in another part of this sketch.

Here should be mentioned Montfleury (1640–1685), the son of an actor and himself a famous actor, as well as author of several comedies, *La Femme Juge et Partie*, *La Fille Capitaine*, and *L'École du Jaloux*. La Fontaine, too, as a writer of comedy, deserves a separate mention. *Le Florentin*, a little piece written to sting Lulli, who had rejected an opera of his in favor of Quinault's *Alceste*, was his only comedy that took a permanent place on the French stage. Boursault (1658–1701) had a great success with his *Le Mercure galant*, *Ésope à la cour*, and *Ésope à la ville*. His *Les Mots à la mode* makes fun of words newly brought in by fashion. Baron (1655–1729) has been mentioned in the sketch of Molière. He wrote comedies with less ability than he played them. Of seven, the *Homme à bonne fortune* alone has kept the stage.

## XI.

## UNDER LOUIS XV.

Before taking a final leave of the age of Louis XIV., it will be well to mention briefly a few writers, not heretofore named, who properly belong to it:—

Charles Perrault (1628–1703) is chiefly known now by his exquisite Fairy Tales. He was, however, the author of many other and more serious works. His famous controversy with Boileau, on the respective merits of the ancients and moderns, originated in a poem which he read before his fellow Academicians, entitled Le Siècle de Louis le Grand or The Age of Louis the Great, in which he contended that modern authors were greater than the most eminent of the Greek and Roman writers. He seconded this poetical claim for the moderns by the publication of a learned treatise, entitled *Parallèle des Ancients et des Modernes*, or Parallel between the Ancients and Moderns. Boileau attacked him and his propositions in his *Reflections on Longinus* (*Refléxions sur Longin*), to which Perrault replied by his *Defence of Women* (*Apologie des Femmes*). This controversy led Perrault to make a special study of his contemporaries, which induced him to write his *Hommes Illustres du Siècle de Louis XIV.*, or Illustrious Men of the Age of Louis XIV. This work contains two hundred critical biographies. The silly controversy about the merits of the ancients and moderns, having passed over into England and engaged the pens of Temple, Boyle, Bentley, Atterbury, and others, finally gave us Swift's *Battle of the Books*.

In his old age Perrault produced the charming



*Contes des Fées*, which he was stimulated to write by the delight inspired in himself and his little friends by the Neapolitan tales of Signor Basile's *Pentamerone*. Bluebeard, The Sleeping Beauty, Puss in Boots, Riquet with the Tuft, and Little Red Riding Hood are among these pleasant creations, or rather revivals of old folk-lore.

Another author of pleasing fairy-tales was the Comtesse d'Aunoy (1650–1705), to whom we owe The Yellow Dwarf, The White Cat, and Cherry and Fair Star. Her sentimental novels, *Hippolyte* and *Comte de Douglas* have passed into oblivion, and her historical memoirs are not considered trustworthy. Along with these should be mentioned Madame Villeneuve's *Contes Marins*, published in 1740, in which appeared the charming story of Beauty and the Beast.

Two oriental scholars, D'Herbelot and Galland, deserve mention as aiding in the delightful task of entertaining the young.

Barthélemy d'Herbelot (1625–1695) was professor of Syriac in the College of France. His *Bibliothèque Orientale*, or Eastern Library, was published after his death by Galland. This work contained a great store of information about the manners and customs and legends of the Arabians, Persians, and Turks, from which writers fond of the marvelous drew their material for a vast number of oriental tales. Among these may be mentioned the Persian Tales, of Petit de la Croix, and Gueullette's Tartar Tales, Chinese Tales, and Mongol Tales. But by far the richest collection was Galland's translation of the famous Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

Antoine Galland (1646–1715) was a distinguished orientalist and numismatist. Accompanying the French ambassador, Nointel, to Constantinople, he made some travel in the East, and, after twice again visiting those lands, he became professor of Arabic in the College of France. Besides his great translation, he wrote several works on the East and on

numismatics, a collection of Eastern sayings, and The Indian Tales and Fables of Bidpai and Lokman.

The wonderful tales of the *Thousand and one Nights* were at first thought to be the invention of Galland's own genius, in spite of his assertion that they were translated from the Arabic. But it has long ago been well ascertained that they are genuine Arabian tales, though probably originating from various sources, Indian, Persian, Arabian, and even perhaps, in some cases, Greek. The Baron de Sacy's opinion as to the origin of the book is thus stated :

"It appears to me that it was originally written in Syria, and in the vulgar dialect ; that it was never completed by its author ; that, subsequently, imitators endeavored to perfect the work, either by the insertion of novels already known, but which formed no part of the original collection, or by composing some themselves, with more or less talent, whence arise the great variations observable among the different MSS. of the collection ; that the inserted tales were added at different periods, and perhaps in different countries, but chiefly in Egypt ; and, lastly, that the only thing which can be affirmed, with much appearance of probability, in regard to the time when the work was composed, is—that it is not very old, as its language proves, but still that, when it was brought out, the use of tobacco and coffee was unknown, since no mention of either is made in the work."

Louis the Great left behind him a widow who did not long survive him. This remarkable woman, Françoise D'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon (1635–1719), born in a prison ; grand-daughter of the great Huguenot captain, and destined to be the greatest enemy of the Huguenots ; glad to escape from poverty by marrying at the age of sixteen the crippled Scarron ; in her widowhood rearing the children of Louis XIV. by his mistress Madame de Montespan ; fascinating the monarch and becoming his wife because she would not be his mistress ;

unhappy in the midst of splendor and power—this singular child of varying fortunes and of a character in which good and evil were curiously mingled, belongs to literature through her letters, published in nine volumes nearly half a century after death. They are written with much skill and evince intellectual powers of no common order, but differ from most French letters in being serious and reflective.

The *Reine de Golconde*, or Queen of Golconda, of the Chevalier de Boufflers (1644–1711) ought to be mentioned, as well as his *Lettres à sa Mère*, as gracefully written and pleasing. He was also the author of many little pieces of gay poetry.

David Augustin Druets (1640–1733) renovated the old farce of *Patelin*, and also, in conjunction with Jean Palaprat, produced two works, *Le Grand-  
eur* and *Le Muet*.

When Louis XIV. died (1715), his great-grandson came to the throne with the title of Louis XV.; but the government was for seven years conducted by Philippe, Duc D'Orléans, as Regent. The Cardinal Dubois, who had been Philippe's tutor and had corrupted his character, became prime minister. France was brought to the verge of ruin by the Regent's folly in authorizing the financial schemes of John Law, the Scottish adventurer. The debauchery which the Regent had made fashionable continued to characterize the court of the King after he began his personal reign. Ruled in succession by Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry, Louis engaged in inglorious wars, made bad alliances and humiliating treaties of peace, coerced the Parlements, exhausted the resources of the country to enrich vile favorites, and left his grandson, Louis XVI., a heritage of hatred which kept steadily gathering into the storm which was to sweep away all the old institutions of the land.

To this dissolute period belongs the poet, Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1670–1741), who must not be

confounded with the sentimental Jean Jacques. He produced religious poems and licentious epigrams with the same facility. He belonged to a school which is traceable to Chapelles, the father of French epicurean poetry. Chapelles (1626-1684), the contemporary of Molière, Racine, and Boileau, indoctrinated into the taste for voluptuous song the Abbé de Chaulieu and the Marquis de la Fare, and these led J. B. Rousseau astray.

Chaulieu (1639-1720) became a veritable pagan in sentiment, and was called the Anacreon of the Temple. There is much charm in his poems. La Fare (1644-1712) was inferior as a poet to Chaulieu, but he wrote *Mémoires*, of which historians have gladly availed themselves.

J. B. Rousseau, who followed these poets in their epicurean vein, produced also fine odes of admirable harmony, and was the introducer of the cantata into French literature. He also attempted the opera, but was driven from this field by the successes of Danchet, La Motte, and Fontenelle.

Madame Dacier, the learned lady of this age who edited so many classical works, had a hot controversy with La Motte on the merits of Homer; and La Motte is better remembered by the wit which he displayed in this controversy than by his poetry. Fontenelle came to La Motte's assistance in this affair, while Rousseau warmly espoused the other side. But this was an insignificant incident in the career of Fontenelle. He was a man of much greater force than those with whom I have just grouped him.

Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657-1757), the nephew of the two Corneilles, Pierre and Thomas, at first followed them in the dramatic career. But his *Aspar* and *Ilalie* having failed, he betook himself to other literary fields. Besides his *Entretiens sur la pluralité des Mondes*, his *Histoire des Oracles*, his *Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences*, his *Éloges des Savants*, and other scholarly and sci-

entific works, he produced *Psyché*, *Bellérophon*, and other operas, a musical and dramatic pastoral called *Endymion*, and a number of comedies, fables, and epigrams. At the age of ninety-two he still wrote madrigals, and when he lay on his death-bed, having almost completed his hundredth year, he uttered his last *bon mot*, saying: "I do not suffer, my friends; but I feel a sort of difficulty in living any longer." He was a great social favorite. One of those ladies, who delighted to be numbered among his friends was Madame de Staal, whose piquant *Mémoires* reveal to us the life of that little court of the Duchesse du Maine at Sceaux, which was in opposition to the court of the Regent. Another of his lady friends was that Marquise de Lambert, whose salon was open to him in Paris, and whom we know as a moralist through her *Conseils* addressed to her son and daughter.

Quite apart from these shunners of the dissolute revelry of the Regent's court was one who had belonged always to that gay circle of which Bussy-Rabutin and Saint-Evremond were fair specimens. This was the Comte de Hamilton. He and Saint-Evremond were both about equally French and English at different periods of their lives. Saint-Evremond's wit had got him into trouble and forced him to spend his last years in England. Hamilton's fate was also, from other causes, to make him divide his life between France and England.

Antoine, Comte de Hamilton (1646-1720), sprung from the illustrious Scottish family of that name, was born in Ireland. Brought up in France during the English Revolution, he returned to London at the Restoration. The Revolution of 1688 drove him again to France, where he passed the thirty years he was still to live. Although a foreigner, he is ranked with the leading French memoir-writers, on account of his *Mémoires du Chevalier de Grammont*, his brother-in-law. This work is a sprightly and witty picture of the dissolute

court of Charles II. of England. Hamilton carries to perfection the art of relating little trifles in such a way as to give them importance. His *badinage*, less elegant than Voltaire's is perhaps more charming, because more natural. His style is characterized by French critics, as having all the ease and grace of the best conversation. The coolness with which he narrates the foul and sometimes inhuman incidents, which made up the life of that shameless court of the Restoration, is perhaps the strongest evidence we can have of the utter corruption of heart and mind which then debased the society in which royalty moved, both in France and England.

Turning to the theatre, we find this intermediate period which fills the gap between Molière and Voltaire filled by Destouches, Crébillon, Lesage, Lafosse, La Grange-Chancel, and Marivaux.

Destouches (1680-1754) was particularly successful in the comedy of character. *Le Glorieux* is pronounced by Geruzéz to be almost a masterpiece, and *Le Philosophe marié* to be but little inferior to *Le Glorieux*.

Crébillon, the dramatist, must be distinguished from his son, the romancer, whom Sterne bantered for a contest in which each should try to shock the public by indecency more strikingly than his rival. The elder Crébillon made his sensations by an appeal to another vulgar taste of human nature.

Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon (1674-1762) was born at Dijon. His tragic vein was not deficient in blood at least. He took pleasure in painting crime, and his *Électre*, *Atrée*, *Idoménée*, are all tragedies of the frightful kind. His *Rhadamiste et Zénobie* had a great success, and is considered by French critics as really fine, true to nature and terrible at the same time.

About this time Lesage produced his *Turcaret*. He had already written his satirical romance, *Le Diable boiteux*.

Alain René Lesage (1668-1747) was born at Sarzeau, in what is now the department of Morbihan. From a lawyer he became a writer. *Turcaret* was so bitter a satire on the financiers of the day, that he is said to have been offered 100,000 francs to suppress it, but he refused to do so. His great work, however, was the immortal *Gil Blas of Santillane*. There he paints human nature at large, and the keenness of observation, wit, fertility of invention, variety and picturesqueness of the incidents, are only equaled by the ease and animation of the style.

But there was another student of human nature, who was at this time recording in private his observations in a very different mood and in a different manner, though with as trenchant a burin. This was the *Duc de Saint-Simon*, who spent his last years in composing those *Mémoires*, which are among the finest in French literature.

Louis de Rouvroy, Duc de Saint-Simon, (1675-1755) belonged to a noble family which claimed descent from Charlemagne. *Pride* was the master-principle of his character, his ruling passion through life. Fanatical on the subject of aristocratic rights and privileges, he was as hostile almost to the court as to the middle class of society. "He was as nearly," says Macaulay, "an oppositionist as any man of his time. His disposition was proud, bitter, and cynical. In religion he was a *Jansenist*; in politics, a less hearty royalist than most of his neighbors. His opinions and his temper had preserved him from the illusions which the demeanor of Louis produced on others. He neither loved nor respected the King." If such were his feelings toward Louis XIV., they were even more unfriendly to the infamous governments which came after the great monarch.

To such a man it was a dark joy to paint the true characters of those whom he looked upon daily with scorn. Pluming himself on his penetra-

tion, and enjoying with an artist's rapture the skill with which he could secretly transfer in burning words to his manuscript the conceptions which his mind had formed of the characters revealing themselves unconsciously before that questioning eye, he produced for later generations a vast gallery of pen-pictures which vividly illustrate that age of vice and worthlessness.

"The Duc de Saint-Simon," says Bulwer-Lytton, "is partly the Tacitus, partly the Juvenal of the old French régime. Of his style it may be said, as it was of Tertullian's, that 'it is like ebony, at once dark and splendid.' He stands amid the decay of a perishing social system. The thorough rot of the old régime is clear to his sanctimonious and solemn eye, through the cracks of the satin-wood which veneers its worm-eaten substance and bungled joinery. I am far from saying that men, on the whole, were rather good than otherwise, and women, on the whole, rather better than the men, in the world which Saint-Simon knew; but his world was very contracted. His personal vanity served to contract it still more. Marmontel said of him, 'that all which he saw in the nation was the *noblesse*; all that he saw in the *noblesse* was the peerage; and all that he saw in the peerage was himself'—an exaggerated judgment, as definitions of character condensed into sarcasms usually are, but not without a large foundation of truth."

The *Souvenirs* of Madame de Caylus describe the same society. Marthe Marguerite de Villette de Murcay, Marquise de Caylus (1673–1729) was a descendant of the D'Aubigné family, converted to Romanism by her kinswoman, Madame de Maintenon. She was famous as a leader of society, and was complimented by Racine in the prologue to his play of *Esther*. Her worthless husband having died, she offended the King—then in his highly moral stage under Madame de Maintenon's influence—by becoming the mistress of the Duc de Ville-roi, but on the death of Madame de Maintenon she was allowed to return to the court, over which



the Regent and Dubois were by that time presiding. In her memoirs she testifies to Louis the XIV.'s excellence in language.

We have seen Port Royal destroyed against the protests of Pascal. It left, however, three disciples, whose virtues were to prove the excellence of the school in which they were trained. These were the younger Racine, Rollin, and Daguesseau, warm friends and steady believers, in an age of faithlessness and skepticism.

Louis Racine (1692-1763), son of Jean, was a gentle poet, more remarkable for being one of the first among his countrymen to study English literature, than for his own productions, which lack vigor. He attempted the translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Charles Rollin (1661-1741) was principal of the College of Beauvais at the time of the elder Racine's death, and it was to his care that young Louis was intrusted by his father. Rollin's whole life was passed in the business of education, and he was twice Rector of the University of Paris. His *Histoire ancienne*, though for several generations a most popular work, has been wholly superseded by the greater accuracy of modern methods in the study of history, and a philosophic treatment of the subject which never entered into the thoughts of Rollin. His utter ignorance of the principles of historical criticism makes him regard all ancient authorities as of about equal value. Villemain, however, praises him highly both as man and historian.

Henri François Daguesseau (1668-1751), Chancellor of France, was the great jurist of his age. He lost his high office on account of his firm opposition to the wild schemes of the speculator Law. In his retirement he composed his *Considérations sur les Monnaies* and the *Mémoire sur le commerce des actions de la compagnie des Indes*, profound treatises on political economy. When the Mississippi scheme

failed, Daguesseau was recalled and restored to his place. Resisting the Regent again, when Dubois was allowed to take precedence of the Princes of the Blood, he was a second time sent to his country house at Fresne. He was, however, restored to his functions, and exercised them until when more than eighty years of age he retired from his high post. His eloquence, learning, probity, and wonderful memory are warmly praised by Saint-Simon, in a passage in which he strongly censures him for those very political virtues which to other minds and in freer lands so greatly enhance the glory of his character. To his works already mentioned should be added his *Méditations*, his *Métaphysiques*, the *Essai d'une Institution au Droit Public*, an unfinished work called *Réflexions diverses sur Jésus Christ*, and the famous *Mercuriales*.

These last were set discourses, delivered either by the Procureur Général or one of his substitutes, the Advocats-Généraux, at the opening of the terms of the Parlement. It was in the exercise of this office that Daguesseau delivered the eighteen *Mercuriales*, which are published in his works. These discourses were lectures on various points of official duty, to which the Parlement was bound heedfully to listen. Daguesseau's subjects are the independence of the advocate, the love of the profession, the dignity of the magistrate, and other qualities required of him. Hugh S. Legaré, in the account of him which he gave in the *Southern Review* says:

"His mind and his heart were equally and perfectly well disciplined. He had received the sort of education which metaphysicians have mentioned as the best practical fruit of mental philosophy. All the powers and capacities of his intellectual and moral being seem to have been cultivated with a view to its highest perfection. His was that harmony of character, the music of the well-tuned soul, in which the Platonists in their dreams of that perfection make it to consist. Truth and beauty—eternal truth, the unblemished form of ideal beauty which

can neither vary nor fade away—were never revealed in greater purity and loveliness to the vision of any man. In those admirable discourses—the *Mercuriales*—Daguesseau has embodied, so to speak, his conceptions of excellence, and not the mere naked conceptions, as a metaphysician might have done, but glowing with life, radiant with glory, clothed in such shapes and hues as genius is sure to bestow upon the objects of its ‘desiring phantasy.’ His works are justly pronounced, by his last editor, one of the best courses of lectures on rhetoric and morals, that is anywhere to be found. Throughout the whole range of his inquiries—involving all the subjects that are most interesting to man as a social and responsible being—religion, ethics, jurisprudence, political justice, and political economy, literature, metaphysics—the same enlarged views, the same refined criticism, the same sound judgment are everywhere displayed, in a style, which we cannot better characterize than by saying that it is in every respect worthy of the age of Racine and Boileau and Bossuet and Fénelon.”

Pure as Daguesseau in character, but exceedingly unlike him in judgment, was the abbé de Saint-Pierre (1658–1743). Romantic and impracticable schemes were the dream of his life. He must not be confounded with Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, the author of *Paul et Virginie*, who lived a century later. The Abbé de Saint-Pierre’s numerous writings, setting forth all sorts of projects for the advancement of society and the furtherance of human happiness, have all passed out of date. But some of his ideas were carried out after the expulsion of the Bourbons from the throne. These dreams of political and social reform were supplemented by Quesnay’s dissertations on political economy and Montesquieu’s thoughts on the philosophy of history.

François Quesnay (1694–1774), eminent as a physician, is noted as the earliest writer on political economy and as the inventor of the term. His principal works were *Maximes Générales du Gouvernement Economique d’un Royaume Agricole, Le*

*Droit Naturel*, *Problèmes Economiques*, and *Dialogues sur le Commerce et sur les Travaux des Artisans*. He was also one of the contributors to the famous *Encyclopédie*, edited by D'Alembert and Diderot.

Montesquieu's place in the thought of this age is a high one. His views were noble and his scope of view was wide. His learning was sufficient to serve as a basis for his sound judgment to build upon, and his imagination served him well in enabling him to bring charmingly witty satire to the aid of his good sense and just discrimination in the sphere of political thought.

Charles de Sconédac, Baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu (1689-1755) was born at his father's château of Brède, near Bordeaux. He became early in life President of the Parlement of Bordeaux. His first work was the famous Persian Letters (*Lettres Persanes*), a satire still diverting to the modern reader from its exquisite humor and the pungency of its criticisms of contemporary manners and customs, as well as from the variety of its topics. These keen thrusts at folly, sometimes taking the neatest epigrammatic form, are put into the supposed correspondence of a Persian resident in Paris.

Montesquieu had been anticipated, in this idea of imagining a foreigner's surprise at the customs of the country, by Dufresny (1648-1724), the writer of comedies, in his *Amusements sérieux et comiques*. But Montesquieu's execution of the idea is far richer, stronger, and more subtle. In invention, wit, humor of contrast, political insight, comprehensiveness in scope of his satire, he has so enlarged and enriched the conception as to have made it fairly his own.

Travel abroad, especially in England, aided greatly in enlightening Montesquieu's mind on political questions. It was after his return from England that he published the work which showed

the thoughtfulness and vigor of his mind ; his Causes of the Greatness and Decline of the Romans (*Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*). The style of this work is marked by a sententious precision of statement which is brilliant and effective. A work, however, of far higher aim was his Spirit of Laws (*Esprit des Loïs*), which sought to examine and describe in a systematic manner the relation between the laws of different states and the genius and fortunes of the races constituting them. The Spirit of Laws was immensely popular, especially in England.

In one part of his subject, the origin of the French monarchy, Montesquieu had been preceded by two antagonistic writers, the Comte de Boulainvilliers (1658-1722) and the Abbé Dubos (1670-1742), both of whom he handsomely complimented, while differing from the views of both. The Abbé Dubos had produced an excellent work in his *Réflexions sur la poésie et la peinture*, which might well be set off against his vagaries on the subject of the philosophy of history.

Montesquieu's personal character was as noble as his works were strong and sensible. His temperament was sunny and sweet. It is given to few men, as Geruzez remarks, to say as Montesquieu did: "Every day I wake up to see the light again with an ineffable joy."

He delighted in solitary reflection, and yet, on the other hand, few social spirits have found greater pleasure in intercourse with their fellows than he. D'Alembert testifies to his charm in society, commenting on his genial gaiety, his agreeable powers in conversation, his wit free from bitterness and sarcasm, his skill in story-telling, and his occasional fits of absence of mind made amusing by his pleasant way of recovering himself.

## XII.

## VOLTAIRE.

IN judging a man's character, it is unwise and unjust to separate him from his age. It is peculiarly fitting that he should be judged by his age, when, as in the case of Voltaire, his is the greatest name of his age. His varied excellence, his immense influence, his prolonged period of intellectual work, entitle him to an extraordinary place in the literature of his country. On the other hand, his open unbelief, the mockery which he directed against everything held sacred by others, the bitterness of his assaults upon Christianity, have combined to give him a bad eminence, and to fill the minds of many good men with a horror of him and his writings.

But, when we come to look deeply into the history of his times, it is easy to see how a mind, clear, subtle, bold, and naturally honest, was brought to indignant revolt against such religion as he saw around him—the horrible hypocrisy of Louis XIV.'s court in those later years when Madame de Maintenon was making the outward profession of piety fashionable—while its lack of depth kept it from seeking the truth for itself with vital earnestness. For, brilliant as was Voltaire's intellect, it had no capacity for original thought.

But, behind this passion against the frauds which he took to be religion—and this passion was really a form of his ardent enthusiasm for the principles of toleration—there were, under all his frivolity and vanity, some noble traits in Voltaire's character. The courage, the skill, the steady obstinacy, with which he defended and rescued the unfortu-

nate family of Calas from the furious bigots of Toulouse; the intrepidity with which he opposed the fanaticism which had cut out the tongue of poor La Barre; the wit and penetration which exposed the wretched mask of piety worn by those to whom the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was due, ought to weigh for something in the scale against that ribaldry and blasphemy at which good men rightly shudder. There was something sound about the heart of that man, who could for years wear mourning on the anniversary of the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, and whose fury at the thought of the shameful scenes enacted then made those who lived about him declare that he actually had a fever on each recurrence of the day. Indeed, the strongest unselfish feeling of his heart, a feeling that seems to have really amounted to a passion, was the hatred of intolerance. It was his strongest virtue, and it gathered other virtues about it, for neither vices nor virtues dwell alone. It led him to do justice to Saint Louis, in spite of his scorn for the Middle Ages—of which, indeed, the eighteenth century was profoundly ignorant; and to Henri IV., because that monarch preferred the peace of his country to the uncertain triumph of the creed for which he had fought.

Nor was his tolerance the fruit of total indifference in religious matters. He turned away in disgust from the atheism of D'Holbach and Lamettrie, Grimm and Diderot. He was, in truth, a sincere deist, and always spoke with reverence of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. His disbelief in Christianity was the natural result of the corrupt form of Christianity which was all that the society of his day had to show him in the way of religious life.

François Marie Arouet (1694–1778), the younger son of the Sieur Arouet, who owned, it is said, a small estate called Voltaire—though, according to Carlyle, the name is simply an anagram of *Arouet*

*le jeune*—was born at Chatenay, near Sceaux. His mother, Marguerite d'Aumart, was of a noble family of Poitou. It was not until he was twenty years of age that he assumed the name of Voltaire. His father was able to give him a good education and leave him a competent fortune. He was early introduced by his godfather, the Abbé de Châteauneuf, into fashionable society, and especially to the celebrated Ninon de l'Enclos, the beautiful, graceful, witty, and accomplished Aspasia of her age. The mistress, in succession, of most of the great men of her long life, she was yet admired by the most respectable women among her contemporaries as a model of taste and elegance. Her mental powers were such, that Scarron, Molière, and La Rochefoucauld are said to have consulted her before giving the final shape to some of their work.

She was now no longer young, but still held her place in society by her many charms. Indeed, she had won a fresh popularity by her refusal to accept the offers of her old friend, Madame de Maintenon, to introduce her at court, provided she would become devout. The gay world outside the court honored her for this honesty in vice, for it was thought a degrading hypocrisy—as in fact it was—to be devout at Louis's court, where fashion had put on that mask so lately. This remarkable woman was eighty-five when Voltaire was presented to her. But the boy of twenty pleased her. As Bulwer-Lytton says:—

“Ninon de l'Enclos took a fancy to this brilliant boy; Ninon de l'Enclos took a fancy to a great many brilliant boys, much more adapted to strike the eye and the senses of an antiquated beauty than the spindle-shanked son of the notary Arouet; but Ninon distinguished young Arouet from other brilliant boys in this—she left him two thousand francs. The youth destined to convulse nations knew by intuition that a man who would raise himself into a power should begin by secur-



ing a pecuniary independence. It has been said of some writers that, from the first, they always tenderly nursed their fame. Voltaire did not do that; he sported with his fame, but he always tenderly nursed his fortune. He early foresaw that his future life would be, as he defined it later, a combat, and accordingly took care betimes to provide himself with the sinews of war. By skilful speculations in the commerce of Cadiz, and in the purchase of corn in Barbary—still more happily by obtaining, through what we should now call a job, an interest *dans les vivres de l'armée d'Italie*, which brought him in 800,000 francs, he established a capital which, as he invested it in life annuities, yielded an income far above that enjoyed by the average number of the half-ruined nobles of France."

But, before the period of these financial successes, he had offended his father by his verse-writing and frequenting gay society, besides falling into a love-scrape at the Hague when there with the Marquis de Châteauneuf, ambassador to Holland; had regained his father's favor by consenting to enter an attorney's office; had been suspected of writing a political satire on the government of Louis XIV., then lately deceased; and had been sent to the Bastille. There he finished his tragedy of *Œdipe* and began the poem called at first *La Ligue*, which appeared afterwards as the *Henriade*.

Released from prison on the establishment of his innocence, his *Œdipe* was performed in 1718, and met with brilliant success. It was really an able play, and would have been finer still, had not the wretched taste of the day and the insistence of the players who knew the public taste, forced Voltaire to mingle with the terror and horror of his Greek subject the incongruity of a love story. In the plays with which he next tried his fortune before the Parisian audiences, he was not so successful.

Meanwhile he had been to Holland again, and before his return to France had made at Brussels the acquaintance of the poet Rousseau, who then

resided there. They soon quarreled, however. Shortly after, a dispute at the dinner-table of the Duc de Sulli with the Chevalier de Rohan resulted in the latter employing his lackeys to waylay and beat Voltaire. On Voltaire's challenging him to fight, the despicable courtier procured a *lettre de cachet* to be issued, by which his adversary was consigned for the second time to the Bastille.

Released at the end of six months, with orders to quit Paris, he withdrew to England. This visit, like the similar one of Montesquieu, had important bearings on his future political and philosophical thought. Voltaire was much struck with the practical workings of the English Constitution. He learned something too of the scientific work of Newton, the metaphysical speculations of Locke, Shaftesbury, and Bolingbroke, and the literature at the head of which even the men of that age of "town-wits" reckoned that *monstrous* Shakspeare whose genius neither they nor Voltaire could ever comprehend.

Returning to France at the end of two years, he met in the gay Parisian circles a fascinating Marquise of twenty-four, to whom he attached himself. This lady, the wife of the Marquis du Châtelet, had, as Mademoiselle Gabrielle Emilie de Breteuil, been of great assistance to the gambling ladies of the court by her wonderful calculating powers. Married while a mere child to a man many years older than herself, and living in a society that rather plumed itself on its immoralities, she accepted Voltaire's addresses. The debts of the husband being heavy enough to force him to economy, he determined to retire to his estate of Cirey in Champagne. Voltaire, who had lent him money, and was on excellent terms with him, made one of the country party. The Marquis did not remain long in his rural retreat, though he would occasionally leave Paris for a brief visit to the little establishment at Cirey.

In this seclusion Voltaire seems to have passed his happiest years. Here he studied physical and mathematical science with Madame du Châtelet, and composed most of his philosophical works. He also wrote here his *Zaïre*, *Alzire*, *Mahomet*, and the *Histoire de Charles XII*. In 1737, the subject of the prize essay to be furnished the Academy of Science was The Nature of Fire and its Propagation. Both Voltaire and Madame du Châtelet competed for the prize, but neither he nor she was successful. Their essays, however, were printed as a mark of approval. The prize was gained by the great scientist Euler. The paper prepared by Voltaire is considered, by so high an authority in scientific matters as Lord Brougham, as indicating his possession of the scientific genius in a high degree. His interest in science and his *Lettres sur les Anglais* did a great work in widening the views of his countrymen and opening up to them new fields of effort.

To wean Madame du Châtelet from her distaste for historical studies, he sketched out a great plan of history and began his *Essai sur les Mœurs*. This is really a sketch of the history of civilization from the time of Charlemagne, and with all its faults, and especially its failure to trace the beneficent effects of Christianity on the corrupt Roman world and the barbaric world of the Teutonic invaders of the empire, it possesses great merits. It is, in the main, candid, just, and generous in its treatment of men and races.

Madame du Châtelet's death in 1748 brought this part of Voltaire's life to a close. About this time an affront to his pride that stung him to the quick made him desirous of leaving France. The small wits of the day, eager to spite him, found out a way to wound his self-love. His place as uncontestedly the first of French tragic poets was assailed. "Old Crébillon," says Macaulay, "who, many years before, had obtained some theatrical success, and

who had long been forgotten, came forth from his garret in one of the meanest lanes near the Rue St. Antoine, and was welcomed by the acclamations of envious men of letters, and of a capricious populace. A thing called *Catiline*, which he had written in his retirement, was acted with boundless applause. Of this execrable piece it is sufficient to say, that the plot turns on a love affair, carried on in all the forms of Scudéry, between Catiline, whose confidant is the Prætor Lentulus, and Tullia, the daughter of Cicero. The theatre resounded with acclamations. The king pensioned the successful poet; and the coffee-houses pronounced that Voltaire was a clever man, but that the real tragic inspiration, the celestial fire which glowed in Corneille and Racine, was to be found in Crébillon alone."

Voltaire's furious anger drove him to the folly of competing with Crébillon. His plays were on the same subjects as those Crébillon had treated, and were not very well received. Frederick the Great's flattering invitations to come to Berlin reaching him at this time, when he was disgusted with Paris and also released by Madame du Châtelet's death from ties of any kind in France, he accepted in an evil hour the Prussian King's overtures. He had complained of absolutism in union with the hypocrisy of a religion such as that Madame de Maintenon had forced on the court of Louis XIV. He had suffered from that absolutism two imprisonments in the Bastille, and exile after the second. He was now to experience the tender mercies of absolutism associated with infidelity and with the name of philosophy.

But the treatment which he received from Frederick, however disgraceful to the King, was richly deserved by Voltaire; for by his own confession his insincerity from the very beginning of their intercourse fully equaled that of the Prussian monarch. It is needless to go in detail through the whole story. It is told by Macaulay in his liveliest man-

ner, in the essay on Frederick the Great. In brief outline, this episode in Voltaire's life runs thus :

Frederick, whose whole reading was in French literature, and who sincerely admired Voltaire as its greatest glory, however extravagant and fulsome were the flatteries which he addressed to the poet, invited him at this time to his court, to accept the office of Chamberlain, the cross of an Order, and a pension of about four thousand dollars for life. He was allowed to bring with him his niece, Madame Denis. In the correspondence between the King and the philosopher, excessive laudations were lavished on both sides. "He treated me," said Voltaire afterwards, "as a divine man ; I treated him as a Solomon." The invitation was accepted, and in 1750 Voltaire left Paris for Berlin, not to return until thirty years had been passed in exile.

Arrived at Berlin, he was welcomed with eager delight. The King and his courtiers played at philosophy. The atheists Frederick had gathered about him grew jealous of the more brilliant and satirical deist. Intrigues and quarrels followed. The King, who had requested Voltaire to criticise and correct his own royal and very bad verses, was told of a speech of the malicious wit's about Frederick's sending him his dirty linen to wash. Voltaire was told of a speech of the King's about his only caring to squeeze the orange and intending to throw it away when he had swallowed the juice. Then Voltaire attacked with his bitter ridicule Maupertuis the philosopher, whom Frederick had made President of the Royal Academy of Prussia. Frederick wrote in the President's defence, and, by way of further criticism, ordered Voltaire's witty pamphlet, *La Diatribe d'Akakia*, to be burned by the hands of the common hangman. Voltaire's rage was soon curbed by the reflection that he was in the power of a despot. He dissembled for a time, and at last obtained permission to leave the king-

dom. At Frankfort he was arrested by a brutal emissary of the King's, on the pretence that he had carried off Frederick's poetry with him. The book had inadvertently been brought away in his baggage. It was returned, but Voltaire and his niece were still detained for a time and treated with great indignity, a large sum of money being extorted from them by the wretches who kept them confined. When Voltaire made Europe ring with his indignant account of the outrage, Frederick disowned responsibility for the act; but its perpetrators were never punished. A sort of reconciliation was patched up years afterwards between the King and Voltaire, and their correspondence was renewed; but there was never again cordiality or confidence between them.

Voltaire now took up his residence in Switzerland at a place near Geneva, which he called *Les Délices*. Later, he purchased Ferney on the shores of the lovely Lake Léman near the French frontier, where he lived through the closing years of his life.

From this place of refuge he poured forth a multitude of pamphlets, tales, poems, and histories, avowing only the great dramatic and historical works and some of the poems; denying, sometimes vehemently, and even to his best friends, his authorship of a whole literature of satires, pasquinades, criticisms, and dissertations political, metaphysical, and theological. As Macaulay well says: "From the time when his sojourn beneath the Alps commenced, the dramatist, the wit, the historian, was merged in a more important character. He was now the patriarch, the founder of a sect, the chief of a conspiracy, the prince of a wide intellectual commonwealth. He often enjoyed a pleasure dear to the better part of his nature, the pleasure of vindicating innocence which had no other helper, of punishing tyranny in high places. He had also the satisfaction, not less acceptable to his ravenous van-

ity, of hearing terrified Capuchins call him the Antichrist."

Here, in his old age, at war with all the world, his most generous actions were performed. The grand-niece of the great Corneille was in want: he provided for her, had her carefully educated at Ferney under his own eye, and issued a fine edition of Corneille's works purposely to raise from its proceeds a sum sufficient for her support.

Jean Calas of Toulouse, a Protestant, was by the fanatical parlement of that city unjustly and inhumanly to be broken on the wheel for the pretended murder of his son because of his intention to abjure heresy. The awful sentence was carried out, and the property of Calas was confiscated. The youngest son was banished, but, captured by the monks, was forced to become a Catholic. The daughters were sent to a convent. The widow Calas escaped to Switzerland, and aroused the interest of Voltaire, whose indignation found vent in his work *Sur la Tolérance*, in which the fanaticism which had ruined this poor family was exposed in burning words. The affair was investigated, and the innocence of all the accused was fully established. Louis XV. gave the sum of 30,000 livres to the survivors. But neither the Parlement of Toulouse, nor the Dominican monks who had kindled the flame of fanaticism, were punished.

Similar exertions in behalf of humanity were made by Voltaire in the case of the cruel punishment inflicted on the boy La Barre for blasphemy by the fanaticism of the priests at Abbeville.

Meanwhile the old patriarch of letters kept up a voluminous correspondence with able men in all ranks of life and in every part of Europe, a correspondence, the political dexterity of which, in addition to the genius put forth in his other writings, acknowledged and unacknowledged, created and maintained for him an influence which made men count him as one of the great powers of Europe.

Amid all these labors and triumphs, the old Frenchman's heart still longed for a sight of Paris. The marriage of a young lady who was under Madame Denis's charge took him at last to the scene of his early dramatic successes. His tragedy of *Irène* had just been finished, and he was to see it played before an audience of another generation from that which had witnessed the performance of *Zaïre* and *Mérope*.

The people of Paris were in a tumult of enthusiasm at the sight of the old patriarch, who had for two generations been at the head of French literature and had for a score of years past been keeping Europe in a ferment with his war against tyranny, injustice, and superstition. They followed his carriage through the streets. They were hours standing before his windows. They supported his feeble steps when he came down the stairway. His bust was crowned with applause at the theatre. He was surrounded everywhere with marks of respect and evidences of attachment. Cries of joy, bursts of acclamation, tears of enthusiastic emotion, greeted him wherever he showed himself. But what moved him most, says Condorcet, was a simple little incident that recalled, not the great works of wit and fancy which he had written, but one brave and unselfish service to outraged humanity. "Who is it they are following?" asked a stranger, who chanced to be in Paris at this time, of an old woman in the streets—"Who is the old man the people are crowding after?" The good woman knew nothing of him as the author of *Zaïre* and *Candide*. She knew but one title that he had to the people's affection. "Do you not know?" said she, "It is the preserver of the family of Calas."

Others valued him as the great literary master. But all welcomed him to the great capital with such an ovation as it has been rarely the lot of a writer to receive from his countrymen. It was too much for the delighted old man. "They wish," said he,



with sincerer tears than he had ever shed before, "to make me die with pleasure." He lost his sleep from excitement and fatigue. The next day he was to receive the eulogies of the Academy. To gain strength for the occasion, he took a dose of opium to woo back the needed sleep. The dose was too large for the old man of eighty-four. He fell into a lethargy, and died, after writing in his last days some words of praise for a decree of the King's, reversing the unjust doom by which the elder Lally-Tollendal had perished. The son had procured this reversal, in great measure through Voltaire's earnest representations of the injustice of the sentence against the old general.

Of Voltaire's works, so numerous are they, it will be useless to attempt to name any but the more important in the many departments of literature which he essayed.

His chief epic, the *Henriade*, only serves to show how little adapted French genius is for epic poetry. It is little more than a long poetical argument for tolerance, with a hero whom he would have been glad to describe as of no religion at all, though he professes two. But Voltaire's contemporaries read and admired those ten thousand Alexandrines.

His other epic, the *Pucelle*, shameful as it is to France and to Voltaire that any Frenchman should have written so vile and false a calumny of the sublime Maid of Orléans, the great heroine of France, is in literary excellence a far finer work, the most poetical, indeed, of all his writings. Lord Brougham says of it:—"In brilliant imagery, in picturesque description, in point and epigram, in boundless fertility of fancy, in variety of striking and vigorous satire,—all clothed in verse as natural as Swift's, and far more varied as well as harmonious,—no prejudice, however naturally raised by the moral faults of the work, can prevent us from regarding it as the great masterpiece of his poetical genius." What a pity it is that, like Byron in the

case of his Don Juan, he should have put his highest powers into a work, the very conception of which is an infamy, and in composing which he seems to have cast all the restraints of decency or even common good feeling to the winds!

His chief tragedies were *Œdipe*, *Zaïre*, *Alzire*, *Mahomet*, *Mérope*, *Oreste*, *Rome sauvée*, *Sémiramis*, the *Orphelin de la Chine*, *Tancrède*, and *Irène*. They exhibit great genius, but lack that intense tone of reality which alone makes a play a true mirror of human life. They are made from the brain, not from the soul. Well-contrived plots, well-conceived characters, occasionally fine stage-effects, brilliant declamation, go to make up plays that may read well and act well. But something more is needed for really great plays. In Voltaire's, as in Sheridan's, and, to some extent, in those of Beaumarchais, the characters all talk well, many of them too well for the parts they are to fill. All speak the same terse, epigrammatic language. It was Molière's deliberate avoidance of this, which brought upon him Boileau's charge that he sometimes debased the language by introducing provincialisms and *patois*.

But Molière was right and Boileau wrong. Voltaire's more serious passages, too, are mere rhetoric; he never rises to the eloquence of deep emotion. The peculiar monotony of French heroic verse, indeed, makes it difficult for the swell of feeling to rise into anything higher than grandiose declamation. Thomas Moore, the delicacy of whose ear for the music of verse no one will dispute, notes in his diary the curiously marked sing-song of the French tragic metre: "Mademoiselle Duchesnois in *Jeanne d'Arc*. Attended watchfully to her recitative, and find that, in nine lines out of ten, 'A cobbler there was and he lived in a stall,' is the tune of the French heroics." It is true that Corneille and Racine were able to put some heart into even this monotonous verse.

The subject of *Zaïre* was suggested by Othello. It is considered the finest of his tragedies. Orosmane, Nérestau, Lusignan, and the heroine *Zaïre* are all masterly creations; and the plot is very happily contrived. *Alzire* is not so pathetic as *Zaïre*, but it is more brilliant. The scene of the play is that New World, so inviting to fiction, in the freshness of its mingled charm as the sphere in which the deeds of the Spanish Conquistadores contrast with the wildness of the primeval forest and the picturesqueness of the natives. Alvarès, Zamore, Gusman, and, above all, *Alzire* are admirably conceived characters; and the old lesson of tolerance which is wrought out in the working of the play is fortunately not allowed to obtrude itself to the detriment of its dramatic interest.

*Mahomet* lacks the elements of power the poet could easily have given it in full accordance with historic truth, had he not been dominated by his disbelief in the sincerity of religious faith. He makes the grand mistake of conceiving the Arabian prophet as an impostor. He did not realize the absurdity of making a Tartuffe the founder of a great religion. Mahomet, Omar, and Séide are all so tainted with fraud, that they fail to infuse into the play the essence of dramatic effect. Geruzez well observes, that the Mahomet painted by Voltaire, far from conquering and converting half the world, would never have succeeded in making a zealot of a single camel-driver. Nothing that he has written shows more strikingly the fatal defect in his genius. "Genius," says Bulwer-Lytton, "may be world-wide, but it should not be world-limited. Voltaire never escapes 'this visible diurnal sphere.' With all his imagination, he can not comprehend the enthusiasm which lifts itself above the earth."

*Mérope* was taken from a piece of the Italian Scipione Maffei, while some of its dramatic effects were borrowed from the *Amasis* of La Grange-Chan-

cel. It is the best of Voltaire's plays on Greek legendary subjects. *Oreste*, which he took from Sophocles, was spoiled by his concentrating the interest on Clytemnestra.

His comedies, *Nanine* and the *Enfant prodigue*; the best among his efforts in that branch of the dramatic art, show conclusively that he had no gift in that direction. He, who was so witty, so maliciously diverting in his romances, satires, and pamphlets, was in the domain of dramatized mirth a failure. His genius was too subjective for comedy. He could approach Corneille and Racine, but was not able to follow Molière even afar off. His critical spirit, however, enabled him to cope with Boileau and Pope in didactic poetry. His *Discours sur l'Homme* is a work of great merit. It was more natural to him to address the understanding than to move the heart; and the serious reasoning, with which he sets forth the doctrines of tolerance and humanity, has the great advantage of sincerity, and is couched in clear, strong, and harmonious verse. No didactic poetry, indeed, is finer.

His historical works, besides the *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, to which I have already alluded, were the *Histoire de Charles XII.*, a model of graceful narrative, and the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, which would have been much more valuable, had he not unhappily written it on a bad plan, destroying its unity by dividing it into separate subjects.

Among the romances, the best are *Zadig*, the *Ingénu*, and *Candide*. The last is particularly charming. Dr. Johnson, who had a special horror of Voltaire, held it in the greatest admiration. Nothing can be more easy, light, and graceful than the wit and humor of this tale.

In his letters and his *Mémoires*, the richness of his fancy, the keenness of his vision, the neatness of his phrase, the trenchant force and swiftness of his wit, the soundness of his common-sense, the

grace of his kindlier mood, the point in which he condensed his thought, give him an eminence below only the very highest in those departments of literature. Indeed, when we see how nearly he touches the supreme of excellence in tragedy, satire, didactic verse, history, tales, romances, letters, memoirs, controversial pamphlets, scientific essays, anything and everything except comedy, we cannot fail to be amazed at the fertility and versatility of his genius, and the wide sweep and sparkle of his powers. If he lacked depth, he had everything else.

## XIII.

## ROUSSEAU, THE STAGE, AND THE ENCYCLOPEDISTS.

VOLTAIRE was the strongest representative of the skeptical and scoffing spirit of his age. Rousseau was the representative of the protest of the human heart against this endless negation. In him this protest took the form of sentimentalism, warmed into intense fervor by an imagination thrilled through with sensuous passion. His protest was not directed consciously against the destructive philosophy of the age, for, while these philosophers tried to disprove the laws on which the accepted conventions of society rested, Rousseau scorned the conventions themselves, strove to overbear them with the enthusiasm of his sentimental creed, and struck at the foundations of all society with such wild logic as he had at his command. His was, then, no formal opposition to the thought of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists, but the vague yet powerful cry of the oppressed, which became later a furious cry that found its logical outcome in the rude force of revolt, and has in our day reached its climax in the lawlessness of communism.

His influence as a social force has been more intense than that of Voltaire; but the thought of Voltaire, commending itself as it does to the worldly-minded in civilized communities, has been and, most likely, will continue to be the dominant influence, until the world is really Christianized. Both have exerted an influence that can be traced in the whole body of European literature since their time. Both have been more powerful as destroyers

than as builders. The one has been the subtle, vivid, keenly flashing, blinding, and blasting lightning, playing in graceful wantonness among the clouds, and striking ever and anon where none could foretell the fall of the thunderbolt. The other has been the furious rainstorm of the tropics, that submerges all that lies within its scope, yet with a lurid beauty and a dreadful grandeur in the mighty surge of its forest-filling waters.

This great genius, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, infinitely little in his private character, his self-confessed meannesses, his selfish vices, and the childish suspiciousness of his nature, but certainly great as a writer, was born at Geneva in 1712 (died 1778). His family was of French origin. His father was a watchmaker. The motherless boy was brought up by an aunt, schooled by a Protestant pastor, put to studying law with a gentleman who decided that he was unfit for that profession, and finally apprenticed to an engraver who treated him harshly and from whom he ran away. Pitied by Madame de Warens, a lady of Savoy, he was placed by her at a charity school in Turin. Running away from this place also, he lived for a time with the wife of a soldier, and was kicked out of doors by the returning husband. Becoming a lackey in the house of the Countess of Vercelli, and stealing a silk ribbon, he accused a maid of the theft, and was dismissed with her. Returning, after a course of wandering, to Madame de Warens, he was received by her—according to his account—as her lover, though to keep up appearances he called her “Mamma.” Going with her to live at Charmettes, he grew melancholy and had to seek medical treatment at Montpellier. On his way, he fell in love with a young lady. Finding, on coming back to Madame de Warens, that she had taken another lover, he went to Lyon and became tutor in a private family there. Believing himself an inventor in musical science, he went on from Lyon

to Paris to read a paper before the *Académie des Sciences*, which body received his project very coldly. Becoming secretary to the French ambassador at Venice, he went with that official to Italy. On his return to Paris, having made acquaintance with men like Diderot, D'Holbach and Grimm, one of that circle, Madame D'Epinay, placed him in a delightful suburban residence called the *Hermitage*, where he lived for years with a girl of the people, Thérèse le Vasseur. Their children—five in number—Rousseau the sentimentalist sent to the Foundling Hospital, though he finally married the mother.

The philosophical coterie, which had tried to make a pet of him, at last tired of him and threw him off unceremoniously. Cast adrift again, he was for a time protected by the Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg, but in the end went back to Switzerland. Invited by David Hume, the Scottish freethinker, to visit him, he went over to England in 1766. The two philosophers failed to agree, however; and, coming back to France, Rousseau was given shelter by the Prince de Conti in the castle of Trye. But he soon had to leave this asylum. The last eight years of his life were spent in great obscurity in Paris. In the early part of the year in which he died, De Girardin gave him shelter from his persecutors, imaginary or real, at his estate of Ermenonville, near Paris, and in this retreat the poor creature died.

In his *Confessions* we see him revealing as great a moral obliquity in his character as Benvenuto Cellini does in his, only in totally opposite directions. Cellini's strange blindness of the moral sense is only an exaggeration of what was common to Italians in his age. But in Rousseau's case, the type is peculiar; and, were it not for the man's genius, few would hesitate in pronouncing his moral disease insanity.

Mean and low as was so large a part of his life,



shameful as were some of its incidents, valueless as were his social speculations, there was a moral force in his vindication of the claims of the meanest human soul, his arraignment of civilization with its luxuries and corruptions, and his sincere praise of nature and her august simplicities. There was, too, a splendid power in his eloquent prose and in the tender accents in which he portrayed an impassioned and voluptuous love.

It is this strength and skill of literary art, combined with his air of speaking in the name of virtue, that has made his writings so seductive to the young. He moves them to sympathy by his eloquence, and then his promise of a new world built on the ruins of our corrupt civilization appeals to that sanguine spirit which is the spring from which youthful ardor so easily and eagerly leaps upward. Taking his stand on that State of Nature, which existed solely in his imagination, he put forth the lying oracle that "all men are equal," to which the world still owes some of its most dangerous social tendencies.

He was nearly forty years of age, when he first found where his power lay. A thesis announced by the academy of Dijon: "Has the Progress of the Sciences and the Arts contributed to corrupt or to purify Morals?" called forth his first real literary effort. This was his *Discours sur les lettres*. After this came his discourse *Sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*. In this prelude to the *Contrat Social*, he pleads against the rights of property. These theses were followed by his impassioned romance, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*; his sophistical Utopia, *Émile, ou de l'Éducation*; his *Contrat Social*, a treatise on government, packed with crazy political and social theories which made it the Bible of the Terrorists of 1793; his *Confessions*—singular work of a half-madman, amazing one by its shameless avowals of infamy and its measureless vanity; and the *Réveries*, won-

erfully fresh and vivid recitals of his impressions after long walks in the outskirts of Paris. To these works must be added the Lettre à d'Alembert sur les Spectacles, written against the theatre and dramatic authors; and the *Lettres de Montagne* and *Lettre à l'Archevêque de Paris*, polemical tracts; *Le Devin de Village*, an opera in which both words and music are his; the *Dictionnaire de Musique*; and, lastly, his *Correspondance*.

A curious proof that there was something sound and pure at the bottom of Rousseau's wild rhapsodies, is the fact, that, while Voltaire's scoffing spirit has infested much of the literature since his day without bringing with it Voltaire's earnest battle for tolerance and gallant defence of the oppressed, Rousseau's love for nature and faith in the soul's immortality inspired in turn Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and De Chateaubriand to a purer and higher tone than Rousseau himself reached, though his genius was far greater than that of either of these followers of his.

But Rousseau, whom I have assigned to this place in my sketch because his genius and its influence entitle him to be named directly after Voltaire, did not begin to write his most characteristic works until Buffon had already become famous, and the Encyclopedists were enjoying the full measure of their renown.

We must turn back, therefore, a few years to sketch their place in literature, and also to mention briefly some of those minor writers who were thought worthy of Voltaire's satire.

Lefranc de Pompignan (1709-1784), the friend of the lyrist J. B. Rousseau, shared with him Voltaire's ridicule. Yet he was by no means despicable as a writer, whether of prose or of verse; and he was, besides, a man of worth in his private character. His sacred songs have some merit; his ode on the death of J. B. Rousseau extorted admiration even from Voltaire; and his tragedy of

*Didon* is a work of some merit. He was a man of more than ordinary acquirements, too, adding to his classical learning some knowledge of English and Italian literature.

Another of those assailed by Voltaire was Gresset (1709–1777), a poet who fairly rivaled the great literary man of the age in the lighter forms of verse. It was of him that Voltaire said, on his quitting the Society of Jesus, "A poet the more and a Jesuit the less is a great blessing to the world." But Voltaire took to heart Gresset's published letter against Comedy, declaring maliciously that Gresset had not sinned very grievously in that way. Yet Gresset's single comedy, *Le Méchant*, is good enough to receive warm praise from Villemain.

Piron also (1689–1773) was an object of Voltaire's attack, but he can hardly be said to have come off the worse in the war of epigrams. His single comedy, *La Métromanie*, is full of wit and fire. Both he and Gresset wrote tragedies also, but these were soon forgotten. Gresset's little poem of *Vertvert* is a graceful and sportive effusion. Some of his other pieces, *La Chartreuse*, *Le Carême Impromptu*, *Le Lutrin Vivant*, and *Les Ombres*, are lively and elegant poems, in which the verse flows with great ease and naturalness.

Gilbert the satirist (1751–1780), who died at twenty-nine, cannot be numbered among those whom Voltaire assailed. He was an adversary to whom, for some reason, the bitter controversialist made no reply. Short as was Gilbert's career, his satire was strong enough to take a place in literature.

But Voltaire did not show the same forbearance toward Fréron the critic (1719–1776), who in his journal made weekly assaults on the philosophy of the day, and especially on Voltaire. The epigrams of the wits are said to have killed poor Fréron, but this may be as apocryphal as the old

story of the death of Keats having been hastened by hostile criticism.

To the Abbé Guénée (1717-1803), who wrote the *Lettres de quelques Juifs*, and to the writer of comedy, Marivaux (1688-1763), Voltaire showed a more forgiving spirit, looking upon them as men of merit, whom he would be sorry to regard as enemies.

Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux was the author of many comedies, the style of which sinned by excess of fine points and straining after wit. This mannerism gave the language a new word, *marivaudage*. The best of his comedies were *Les Fausses Confidences* and *Le jeu de l'Amour et du Hasard*. He is not deficient in depicting character, but his dialogue lacks naturalness and is too brilliant for truth to nature. In romance he succeeded better, his *Mariane* taking high rank among French works of fiction. He also wrote a romance called *Le Paysan Parvenu*.

Besides these writers, who were associated with Voltaire's career, either as mercilessly satirized by him, or as his assailants whom he saw fit to spare, there were others, younger men, whom he generously aided and drew to his side as friends. Among these were Marmontel and La Harpe.

Jean François Marmontel (1728-1799), after making himself some reputation as a poet in Toulouse, went to Paris on Voltaire's invitation in 1746. He had no great success, however, with his tragedies and operas, but through Madame de Pompadour's influence got a secretaryship at Versailles, and, later, was put in charge of the *Mercure*. In this paper he began to publish his *Contes Moraux*, which have had great popularity, and have been translated into many languages. He wrote also a political romance called *Bélisaire*, which contained a chapter on toleration that raised the ire of the doctors of the Sorbonne. *Bélisaire* was condemned as heretical and blasphemous. The tempest it raised gave rise

to a whole literature of pamphlets, epigrams, and caricatures. Out of this tumult Marmontel emerged as historiographer of France, the wits winning the day at court against the clerical party. He was a contributor to the famous *Encyclopédie*, being assigned the departments of poetry and general literature. This contribution he also published separately, under the title, *Éléments de Littérature*. This is a body of judicious and able criticism. Another work of his, which Geruzez classes with the *Bélisaire*, calling them both "poems in prose," is *Les Incas*. His *Mémoires* are said to be very entertaining.

Jean François de La Harpe (1739–1803) was called the French Quintilian. He was an excellent critic, and is now chiefly remembered by his *Lycée, ou Cours de Littérature Ancienne et Moderne*. His first essays in literature were satirical verses, which got him into trouble with the government. He next tried dramatic writing, producing *Warwick*, *Philoctète*, and *Mélanie*, which had better success than Marmontel's tragedies. But his success in these efforts was not so great as to satisfy him, and he abandoned the drama. He visited Voltaire at Ferney in 1766, and was his guest for two years. On his return to France, he devoted himself to criticism, becoming a regular contributor to the *Mercur*.

Both Marmontel and La Harpe lavished eulogies on Voltaire. La Harpe was, in the closing years of his life, a participant in the thrilling scenes of the Revolution, and was at first a strong republican; but, suffering imprisonment under the Directory, his views underwent some change.

Saint-Lambert (1717–1803) was still more extravagant in his praise of Voltaire. He set him above Corneille and Racine. This overstrained homage occurs in a poem called *Les Saisons*, a work of no great merit. His prose is still heavier. The

*Catéchisme universel* is a work in which the hard, materialistic philosophy of the age is formulated.

*Les Saisons* was the first swallow of a great flock of descriptive poems, Delille's *Les Jardins*, Lemierre's *Les Fastes*, Rosset's *L'Agriculture*, and Roucher's *Les Mois*. Delille had already won some reputation by his fine translation of Virgil's *Georgics*.

Lebrun (1729-1807) wrote odes inferior only to those of J. B. Rousseau, while he perhaps excelled him in his epigrams. He also paid homage to Voltaire.

De Belloy (1727-1775), a tragic writer of no great power, made a great success in his *Siège de Calais* by his fortunate choice of a subject which possessed national interest.

Lemierre (1723-1793), besides that descriptive poem of which mention has already been made, produced tragedies that deserved their success.

Guismond de La Touche (1725-1760), in his *Iphigénie en Tauride*; Saurin (1706-1781), in his *Spartacus*; La Noue (1701-1761), in his *Mahomet II.* and his much-applauded comedy of *La Coquette corrigée*; and Ducis, in his transfers to the French stage of Shakspeare's *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello*, all deserve brief mention. They were all admirers of Voltaire and received his gracious approval, although he expressed some regret, in view of the irregularity of Ducis's plots, at having made Shakspeare known to his countrymen.

But the great effort of that age of free-thinkers, in the way systematizing their philosophy, was the *Encyclopédie*. Voltaire, who did not wholly sympathize with its founders, declared that it was built half of marble and half of mud. It was, indeed, a sort of Tower of Babel. Its authors were of various shades of revolutionary opinion and held different degrees of skeptical doctrine. Their theories were not harmonious. Besides the troubles caused by their own divisions and discrepant views, their

essays as fast as published were vehemently assailed from without. Still, the work was finally published, in twenty-eight volumes, with a supplement, later on, in five volumes, and, finally, an analytical index in two volumes. Biography and History were deliberately excluded. The topics which found admission were discussed with greater originality than any compilation of the sort had yet shown, and the articles were prepared with great ability. It was received with immense enthusiasm. D'Alembert traced the plan, and Diderot in the main charged himself with the task of editing. The chief writers in it were, besides the editors, Grimm, Rousseau, Voltaire, Dumarsais, D'Holbach, and Jaucourt. D'Alembert's preface was considered a master-piece.

Jean-le-Rond d'Alembert (1717-1783) was one of the most distinguished mathematicians of his time. He was the illegitimate son of Madame de Tencin and a M. Destouches. Exposed by his unnatural mother on the steps of the Church of St. Jean-le-Rond, and put by the guard who found him there in the hands of a poor glazier's wife, he was brought up by her, the father secretly allowing him a sum of 1200 francs a year. He lived for nearly forty years with his good foster-mother, pursuing his favorite studies in that humble home, and sharing with her his slender income. She, though loving him well, used to expostulate with him on the subject of his studies, saying: "You will never be anything but a philosopher; and what is a philosopher but a fool, who torments himself while alive, that folk may talk about him after he is dead!" He did make an effort to seek a profitable career for his abilities, trying first law and then medicine; but his passion for science was too strong. His treatises on scientific subjects, however, soon won him reputation. He was through life singularly indifferent to riches and distinctions. Frederick of Prussia offered him the presidency of his

Academy, but he declined the honor. Catherine II. of Russia invited him to take charge of her son's education, at 100,000 francs a year; but he declined this also. He never married, though he was for many years greatly attached to Mademoiselle Espinasse, whose death was thought to have hastened his. He was a man of great benevolence; and, though his views on the subject of Christianity are well known from his private correspondence with Voltaire and Frederick the Great, he refrained from attacking religion in his published writings.

It was not so with Diderot. Sincere, eloquent, and outspoken, a fatalist, an eager talker, and an unwearied worker, he proclaimed his infidelity with the zeal of an apostle.

Denis Diderot (1713-1784), like D'Alembert, practised that practical charity which the Gospel he disbelieved so strongly enjoins, and which Christianity introduced into the spirit of society. Being in his early life reduced to want, he made a vow never to disregard the prayers of the needy. This resolution he faithfully kept. When in comparative wealth, he was thronged by applicants for help in various ways, and he is said to have been always ready to furnish the aid sought for. He married while still very poor, and this forced him to great exertions. A translation of the History of Greece from an English work brought him a hundred crowns. Finding himself successful in literary work, he now wrote his *Essai sur le Mérite et la Vertu*, the *Pensées Philosophiques*, the *Interpretation de la Nature*, and the *Lettre sur les Aveuglés*. This last work sent him to the prison of Vincennes for three months. He wrote also for the stage, but was unsuccessful in his dramatic attempts. His best work was what he did for the *Encyclopédie*. Finding himself obliged, in his later years, to sell his library, to provide for his only daughter, he was urged by the Empress Catherine to come to



Russia and be librarian, at a salary of one thousand francs, she purchasing his library on condition that he would accompany it. He went to St. Petersburg—though merely to thank the Empress, while declining to assume the offered post, and died on his return the next year.

Among his romances, the most powerful are *Jacques le Fataliste*, and *Le Neveu de Rameau*. His writings are full of fire and passion, but have the negligent style of an improviser. Indeed, he affected conversational carelessness in writing, under the conviction that naturalness was a virtue always to be aimed at; and it was this labored abruptness and disconnectedness in the dialogue which chiefly spoiled his plays, *Le Père de famille* and *Le Fils naturel*.

Friedrich Melchior, Baron Grimm, (1723–1807) was born at Regensburg, (Ratisbon) on the Danube. Accompanying the young Count of Schönberg to the University at Leipzig, and afterwards to Paris, he became a permanent resident in the French capital, Rousseau introducing him to Diderot and other eminent literary persons, and thus opening up to him a brilliant future. Diderot and D'Alembert employed his pen in their *Encyclopédie*. Becoming secretary to the Duke of Orleans, he acquired much reputation in Germany by the literary bulletins which he sent periodically to some of the petty princes of the empire. But Diderot and the Abbé Raynal supplied him with much of the material used in these critical letters. He received his title of Baron from the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. When the Revolution came, he took refuge in Gotha. Besides what he supplied to the *Encyclopédie*, his literary remains are *Correspondance Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique*, with a supplement entitled *Correspondance inédite de Grimm et Diderot*.

Paul Heinrich Dietrich, Baron von Holbach (1723–1789) was born at Heidelberg, in the Palatinate. He took up his residence in Paris early in

life. He was a pleasant social companion, and, having inherited wealth, was able to entertain in fine style. His guests were the most eminent literary men of his time,—Diderot, Helvétius, Raynal, Rousseau, Buffon, and the like. He was one of the extreme antagonists of religion. His chief work was the *Système de la Nature*, in which he sought to deduce a moral scheme from natural principles. The book advocated materialism and atheism in their crudest forms. That he was kind-hearted and unselfish must be granted even by those who are most shocked at his doctrines. The Jesuits were especially obnoxious to him; yet, when they fell into disgrace, he made his house a refuge for several of them.

Claude-Adrien Helvétius (1715–1771), sprung from a family of Swiss origin, was born at Paris. After leading the gay and profligate life of a courtier for some two years, he grew disgusted with its frivolity, married the charming daughter of the Comte de Ligneville, and retired to a little estate at Voré, where he spent his time in bringing up his children, caring for the welfare of the peasantry, and writing his philosophical books. His *De l'Esprit* was devoted to his favorite theory, that sensibility is the source of all the higher operations of the mind, and that matter alone exists. The Sorbonne and the Parliament of Paris condemned the book. Helvétius also left a posthumous work, *De l'Homme, de ses Facultés, et de son Education*.

Guillaume Thomas François Raynal (1711–1796) was an abbé, whose sympathy with the skeptical thought of the age soon drove him from the Church into literature. He became one of the editors of the *Mercur*. In conjunction with Diderot, he wrote the *Histoire Philosophique et Politique des Établissements et du Commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, a work which from its strictures on superstition excited the ire of the clerical party, who procured its condemnation by the Parlement.

To the student of English literature this book is perhaps known only from the extraordinary rhapsody into which Raynal bursts, when treating of the birthplace of that Mrs. Draper, whom Sterne affected to adore under the name of his "Brahmine." It begins: "Territory of Anjinga, you are nothing; but you have given birth to Eliza. One day these commercial settlements founded by Europeans on the coast of Asia will exist no more. The grass will cover them, or the avenged Indian will have built over their ruins; but if my writings have any duration, the name of Anjinga will remain in the memory of men." There are three more pages of this absurd rubbish.

Among these sentimental skeptics were Madame Du Deffand and Madame D'Épinay.

Marie de Vichy Chamrond, Marquise du Deffand (1697-1780), was born of a noble family of Burgundy. She early gave evidence of the boldness of judgment which won her so many admirers in her mature years. Massillon was deputed by her parents to win her to acquiescence in their creed. But the great preacher did not succeed in this mission, though he was himself greatly impressed by her beauty and intellectual charm. Her marriage with the Marquis du Deffand was an unhappy one, and they were soon separated. She then plunged into all the gallantries and follies of that depraved society which constituted the Regent's court. She gathered about her all the brilliant men of her day. She kept up a correspondence with some of the foremost thinkers in Europe. She made her soirées at her hôtel in the Rue St. Dominique the gathering-point for all that was select in Parisian society, including the eminent foreigners who visited that city.

Becoming blind when between fifty and sixty years old, she chose Mademoiselle d'l'Épinasse, as reader and companion. But growing jealous after a time of the attentions paid this young lady, she

parted with her. Her rival, however, took away from the saloon of the marquise, D'Alembert and many more of her admirers. The correspondence of Madame du Deffand with D'Alembert, Hénault, Montesquieu, the Duchesse du Maine, Horace Walpole, and Voltaire, is of great interest as making part of the memoirs of that age of materialism in philosophy and of corruption in society.

Louise Florence Pétronille de la Live d'Épinay (1725-1783) married her cousin, and, like the Marquise du Deffand, failed to find happiness in married life. Her husband was a debauchee. Her taste was for men of genius. When Rousseau came to Paris, she took a fancy to him and gave him the Hermitage for a residence. This was a little house in the woods of Montmorency on land of her husband's. Rousseau and Grimm, however, quarreled and involved Madame D'Épinay in the dispute, which ended in Rousseau's becoming again a wanderer and eventually calumniating the woman who had befriended him. She had, however, to the last, a select circle of literary men around her. Under the direction of Diderot, she took Grimm's place, on his leaving Paris, in preparing for the German princes, criticisms of French literature. She also produced an educational work of some merit, *Conversations d'Émile*. To this must be added her work called *Les Confessions du Comte de \* \* \**, together with a large correspondence carried on with Grimm, Diderot, Rousseau, and others.

Another famous entertainer of literary men in this period, and herself a little of an author was Madame Geoffrin.

Marie Thérèse Geoffrin (1699-1777) was born at Paris. Her father was a valet-de-chambre named Rodet. But her marriage to a very rich manufacturer and his death soon after left her at an early age the mistress of an immense fortune. She drew literary men around her, and her wealth was of

great assistance in the publication of the *Encyclopédie*. She is said to have contributed no less than 100,000 francs for that purpose. She was not only liberal to men of letters, but bestowed her gifts with a delicacy which gave them double value. Her attentions to distinguished foreigners won her their esteem and affection. Poniatowski, to whom she had been particularly kind, announced to her his elevation to the throne of Poland in the words: "Mamma, your son is king." He afterwards induced her to visit Warsaw, and received her there with a truly royal welcome. Her treatise, *Sur la Conversation*, and her *Lettres* were published after her death by Morellet.

Madame D'Houdetot and Madame Suard should also be mentioned as eighteenth century queens of society. Some of Madame D'Houdetot's sweet verses still hold a place in collections of French poetry. Madame Geoffrin, Madame d'Houdetot, and Madame Suard were all famous in their day for their salons, where all that was witty, elegant, and distinguished found a glad welcome and congenial surroundings.

## XIV.

## ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION.

WE have not yet completed the roll of Voltaire's and Rousseau's contemporaries. But the ablest of them, Buffon, must be reserved until some minor writers, not mentioned yet, have been disposed of.

Charles Pineau Duclos (1704-1772) was a Breton. As a writer of romance and history, he was held in great estimation by his contemporaries. His romances were *Acajou et Zirphile* and *La Baronne de Luz*. His principal serious work was the *Histoire de Louis XI*. He also produced memoirs of the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV. He was cold and mannered in his historical writings.

Dumarsais (1676-1756) was of note mainly as a grammarian. Geruzez praises his method as superior to that of Duclos, who labored in that field also. The same critic accords to another grammarian, Beauzée (1717-1789), superiority in originality and profundity; and to still another, Count de Gébeline (1725-1784), excellence in invention, whatever that may mean. To Rulhière (1735-1791) he also accords superiority over Duclos, as historical writer, eulogizing the *Histoire de l'Anarchie de Pologne*, in which he thinks Rulhière has shown himself an able painter and profound political thinker. Duclos's true title to remembrance, in Geruzez's judgment, rests on his *Considerations sur les Mœurs*.

Vauvenargues (1715-1747) was a writer, like La Rochefoucauld, of thoughts and maxims. Devoted, in spite of frequent illness, to earnest inquiry into moral truth and the nature of man, he might, had he lived longer, have taken an eminent place among moralists. The contrast in spirit and tone

which he presents to the age in which he lived adds to his merit, and it is refreshing to find so pure a believer in virtue amid that throng of scoffers.

It is a credit to Voltaire, that he held Vauvenargues in high regard and esteem. Duclos and Vauvenargues stand together in the unspiritual atmosphere of their age as almost the only sober thinkers.

The Comte de Tressan (1705-1783) led the way in resuscitating the literature of the Middle Ages, the fabliaux and the legends of the Round Table.

Classical studies were kept from utter decline by the labors of the President de Brosses (1706-1777).

One of the first of the many attempts which have been made to introduce the modern reader to the inner life of antiquity, was the *Voyage du Jeune Anacharris en Grèce*, by Jean Jacques Barthélemy (1716-1795). The Abbé makes his Anacharsis journey from Scythia to Athens and there observe the peculiarities of Greek life and manners. Though full of anachronisms, the characteristics of Greek life at several different periods being confounded together, it is a work of some charm, helped greatly to popularize the knowledge of ancient life, and has been imitated in later times by Becker in his *Gallus* for Roman and *Charicles* for Hellenic life. Barthélemy was a man of extensive learning. Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldee were among his studies. His first distinction was that obtained by his discovery of the Palmyran alphabet. The Revolution deprived him of his offices, and rudely disturbed his studies. Among his works were *Reflexions sur l'Alphabet et la Langue de Palmyre*, *Explication de la Mosaïque de Palestreine*, and a romance entitled *Caryte et Polydore*.

Another man of learning was the eminent physician, Paul Joseph Barthez (1734-1806). He founded at Montpellier a medical school which had a great reputation all over Europe. He was ruined by

the Revolution; but Napoleon recalled him from exile, and bestowed honors and dignities upon him. His *Nouveaux Eléments de la Science de l'Homme* advocated a system founded on dynamical principles. He wrote also *Nouvelle Mécanique des Mouvements de l'Homme et des Animaux*, *Traitement des Maladies Goutteuses*, and *Consultation de Médecine*. These are purely scientific works; but I shall more than once have occasion to mention medical writers and other specialists among the attractive writers in the French language, for that clearness of statement and liveliness of illustration, as well as enthusiasm of tone, which have only in our day made science popular with the great mass of English readers, were cultivated at a much earlier period by the French men of science.

Another earnest worker in these times was Thomas (1732–1785), a philosophical writer in the manner of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. There is too much strain and emphasis, however, in his sententious utterances. His *Éloges* have too much of the rhetorician's art about them to please, though the sentiments are noble. In his verses the same vice of self-conscious effort spoils the effect.

Among the scholarly minds of the period was the Abbé de Mably (1709–1785), the author of *Les Entretiens de Phocion* and *Observations sur l'Histoire de France*. He compared, greatly to the discredit of the moderns, the institutions of the ancient republics with those of his own day.

Of writers for the stage, besides those already mentioned, there were Mercier (1740–1814), and Sedaine (1717–1797). Sedaine was an uneducated genius. His *Philosophe sans le Savoir*, produced for the Théâtre Français; *Le Déserteur* and *Richard Cœur-de-Lion*, written for the Opéra Comique; and *Aline, Reine de Golconde*, written for the Grand Opéra, were pieces characterized by excellent taste and exquisite naturalness.

Jacques Cazotte (1720–1792), was first brought



into notice by a mock romance and a coarse song. He afterwards wrote his *Roman d'Olivier* and *Le Diable Amoureux*. He also continued with admirable skill Voltaire's account of the civil war in Geneva. Suddenly he became notorious as a pretender to the gift of prophecy; and La Harpe tells a story of his breaking out, in the time of his mysticism, at the close of a gay banquet, into a rhapsody in which he related to the carousers around him, with all the precision of a Highland Scot's vision of second-sight, the fate which awaited each one of them. He himself, adhering to the royal cause during the revolutionary storm, fell a victim to the rage and fear of the bloody tribunals of that time.

I have mentioned La Harpe before, in treating of the friends and eulogizers of Voltaire.

Jean Pierre Claris de Florian (1755-1794) was one of those poets and romancers who pretend only to amuse. Protected by the Duc de Penthièvre, he was suspected of "incivism" on the outbreak of the Revolution, and suffered imprisonment. His first literary success was a poetical epistle called *Voltaire et le Serf du Mont Jura*. His eclogue, *Ruth*, was also crowned by the Academy. In his *Galatée*, he imitated Cervantes; and in his *Numa Pompilius*, Fénelon. Other works of his were his *Fables*; his *Gonsalve de Cordove*; a romance founded on the story of William Tell, which he worked at during his imprisonment, but never finished; and an abridgement of *Don Quixote*. His best work was a pastoral entitled *Estelle*.

A poet imbued with thoroughly Hellenic tastes and genius makes a marked contrast to the superficially romantic tone of Florian. This was André-Marie de Chénier (1762-1794). Born in Constantinople, he traveled much in after years. His poems were for the most part idyllic. Such are *Le Mendicant*, *L'Aveugle*, and *Le Jeune Malade*. Shortly before the Revolution, he produced his *Elegies*, the *Art d'Aimer*, *L'Invention*, *Hermes*, *Susanne*, and *La*

*Liberté*. He took an active part in the Revolution, opposing the Jacobins and the execution of the King. Resisting the arrest of a lady in whose house he was living at Passy, he was arrested and imprisoned. Before his execution, he wrote some striking poems.

Marie-Joseph de Chénier (1764–1811), younger brother of André, was also born in Constantinople. His first tragedy, *Azemire*, was almost a failure. His next, *Charles IX.*, still keeps a place on the stage. After these appeared *Henry VIII.*, *Anne de Boulen*, the *Mort de Calas*, *Caius Gracchus*, *Timo-léon*, *Fénelon*, and *Cyrus*. He also put on the stage a version of Lessing's *Nathan the Wise*, and translations of the *Œdipus Turannos* and *Œdipus at Colonos* of Sophocles. His lyric poems are full of freshness and elevation of tone. His *Epîtres* are able, and one of them, the *Epître sur la Calomnie*, is considered by French critics as worthy of the highest praise. His *Satires* are also ranked very high by his countrymen. His imitations of Ossian will recall to the minds of readers of history the prevalence of a taste in France for that wild and cloudy bombast, which marked the effort of the revolutionary spirit to shake off even in literary art the bonds of order, and which made Napoleon in his early days an enthusiastic admirer of Macpherson's rhapsodies. Chénier was also eminent as a prose-writer. His *Tableau de la littérature française depuis 1789* enjoys a high reputation. He took a more prominent part than his brother in the stormy scenes of the Revolution, being at the head of several of the public bodies so rapidly organized in those ever-changing days. He, however, gave in his adhesion to the Empire, and it was at Napoleon's request that he prepared his work on recent French literature. Among many odes of his was the famous *Chant du Départ*.

Sébastien Roch-Nicholas Chamfort (1741–1794) was the illegitimate son of a strolling actress. He

began life with only the name "Nicolas"; but, getting into the Collège des Grassins, he worked well and won prizes. Assuming the name of "Chamfort," he began his literary career by writing sermons for lazy curé's at a louis apiece. Competing successfully for one of the Academy prizes, the gay world was henceforward, open to him. His brilliant and bitter talk made him much admired. Madame Helvétius entertained him for some years at Sèvres. He won other prizes, and finally went to court under the protection of the Duchesse de Grammont. Retiring to Auteuil, after attaining a brilliant place in the world and experiencing only disgust with it, he there fell in love with a lady of the household of the Duchesse du Maine, and married her. But, six months after the nuptials, his wife died, leaving him more bitter than ever in his views of life. When Mirabeau began to undertake the perilous task of guiding the storm of the Revolution, Chamfort came heartily to his side, and helped him with the literary part of his orations; for, though Mirabeau was a marvel in delivery, it was to Chamfort and Dumont, it seems, that he was mainly indebted for his ideas and their form.

Chamfort took an earnest part in the struggle, and was one of the storming party that broke first into the Bastille. But, criticising the Convention as bitterly as he had criticised the court, he fell before that new tyranny. It was he who made the political fortune of the Abbé Siéyès, by giving him the striking title to his pamphlet: "What is the Third Estate? Everything. What has it? Nothing." He left few writings. His fame rested chiefly on his brilliant talk. His best works were an *Éloge* of Molière and one of La Fontaine, as well as a pretty comedy entitled *La Jeune Indienne*.

Over against the pessimist, Chamfort, who despaired of human nature and was always saying bitter things of it, should be set the sweet temper

and joy in God and nature of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1737-1814) was one of those souls that remain optimist in spite of many and long-continued trials. His imagination was always pleasing itself with charming illusions, and dissappointments had no power to embitter his spirit. The justice and mercy of God, the consolations of human love, and the ineffable charm of nature were for him beautiful verities that took the sting from all that was painful in the immediate present. His *Études de la nature* is a work that reveals at once his key-note, belief in the possible harmony of God, Nature, and Man. His style is as beautiful, as his imagination is rich, pure, and chaste. His *Vœux d'un Solitaire* breathes the same spirit, while it is to that dominant note of Christian philosophy that his tropical tales, *Paul et Virginie* and the *Chaumière indienne*, owe their freedom from the taints which like subjects handled by Rousseau would infallibly have had. *Paul et Virginie*, the delight of childhood, even in translated form, is really a work of genius. As Geruzez says of it, "it has that grace of eternal youth which time withers not." Few prose idylls have ever been written with a skill so poetic and artistic. The grouping, the coloring, the atmospheric tone are all those of the painter. Everything about the story is picturesque. To the colder criticism of the mature mind it is too much so; there is too much of that theatrical grace and beauty for absolute truth to nature. But to the guileless fancy of childhood it is true and charming.

The Abbé Prévost (1697-1763) ought not to be forgotten when mention is made of the romancers of this period. Rousseau's contemporary, he painted in his *Manon Lescaut* a picture of passion as glowing as that of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, yet free from the over-strained sentiment and the disordered morality of Rousseau. It is the most wonderful

picture of single-minded devotion to an unworthy mistress in all literature.

Among the scientific contributors to the *Encyclopédie* was Condorcet.

Jean Antoine Nicolas de Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794), was one of the most eminent scientists of his age. His *Essai sur le Calcul Intégral* gained him early in life a seat in the Académie des Sciences. His *Éloges des Académiciens Morts avant 1699* won him still higher honors. He won also a prize from the Berlin Academy by his theory of comets. His *Éloges et Pensées de Pascal* does credit to his heart as well as his head. During the Revolution he took a prominent part, acting in general with the Girondists, and falling with them when they fell. During his time of concealment he wrote his *Esquisse des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*. He was finally arrested, and one morning was found dead in prison.

The great master of style among the writers who were now devoting themselves to that study of nature which became so absorbing a passion in the next century, was Buffon.

George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, (1707-1788), after traveling through France and Italy with Lord Kingston and his tutor, a man of scientific tastes, accompanied them to England, where, to improve his English, he translated works of Newton and Hales. Appointed in 1739 Intendant of the Royal Garden and Museum, his mind was directed especially to the study of zoölogy, which resulted in his undertaking his *Histoire Naturelle*, a work covering thirty-six volumes. It was from this work that Oliver Goldsmith avowedly borrowed the greater part of his *Animated Nature*. The task to which Buffon devoted fifty years of his life was no less than the description and explanation of nature as a whole and in all its parts. His work has no great scientific value now, but his method is still esteemed by scientists. "Up to his

time," says Cuvier, "the history of nature had been written with fulness only by compilers who had no ability; the other general works offered only dry nomenclatures. Excellent and very numerous observations existed, but all upon particular points. Buffon conceived the project of combining, on a vast plan and with the eloquent diction of Pliny, the profound views of Aristotle with the exactness and the minuteness of detail with which the moderns had observed facts."

Buffon did not begin his life-work until he was thirty-three years old. But he had early prescribed for himself a system of study, which he would not permit himself to deviate from, setting apart a certain number of hours each day for this purpose. At six every morning it was a servant's duty to wake him up. This duty was discharged by the same man for sixty years, and this faithful valet's testimony was that his master had never once broken the rule which he had imposed upon himself. Method like this tells. A vast deal of work can be accomplished by the man who so regulates his life. It goes far to sustain Buffon's own definition of genius, as "a long patience."

His account of the origin of the earth and the growth of fauna and flora upon it, with their subsequent development from natural causes, is of course in many points behind the present lights of science. But, viewed as a whole, it is safe to say that his theory is in the main that which the astronomers and geologists of our day still hold. Instead of the nebular hypothesis, however, he supposes the earth to have been brought into being by the collision of a comet with the sun, a part of the incandescent mass of that luminary having been struck off into space and by the laws of gravitation and centrifugal force assuming its ultimate shape and rotation.

Leaving this subject and his investigation of inorganic matter, as well as the history of the vege-

table kingdom—which he handles very superficially—we come to the animal kingdom, where he is more at home. He begins by rejecting all systems of classification. He figures to himself a man who sees for the first time the creatures around him, animate and inanimate, without any preconceived notions to embarrass his judgment. He then traces the process of natural classification which must go on in such a man's mind—the separation of the animate from the inanimate; the division of objects into animal, vegetable, and mineral; the division of the animals into quadrupeds, birds, and fishes; the separation of the quadrupeds into the domesticated and the wild. Buffon took this method himself. Later, however, he modified the disdain of scientific method with which he had set out, notably in his natural history of birds.

In truth, what Buffon really excelled in was his eloquent manner of setting forth what he knew, rather than in profound or accurate knowledge. Yet his knowledge was beyond doubt copious and extensive. He was aided, too, by Daubenton in the preparation of the details of his work. Combining the dry facts of anatomy and physiology with an animated description of the habits of animal life and the homes and haunts of the creatures whose framework Daubenton had just analyzed, he made a long step towards popularizing science, a rare feature of genius in his time, and one that constituted no small part of his charm.

In his history of man, he is decidedly antagonistic to the school which in our day seeks to connect man closely with the rest of the animal creation. "Man," says he emphatically, "is not more reasonable, not more spiritual for having abundantly exercised his ears and his eyes. One does not see that people of obtuse senses, the short-sighted, the deaf, the defective in the sense of smell, have less intelligence than others. This is an evi-

dent proof that there is in man something more than an interior animal sense." He declares for the existence of the soul It is, he says, of a different nature from matter, and thought is its form. As a naturalist, he takes pains to deny to the brutes any share in this unique possession.

Style was a study with Buffon. He labored strenuously to express himself in the best manner, correcting again and again, reading aloud what he had written, to have the witness of his ears to the perfection of his periods, and in his heart believing that he improved in this matter as he grew older. His supreme value for style made him even unjust to extemporaneous oratory; nor is it likely that he could really understand the fiery and impassioned eloquence of an age less cold, didactic, and skeptical than that in which he lived.

The corruption of the court, a ruinous financial system, the wide spread of atheistic doctrines and theories subversive of all government, the oppressive privileges of the nobility maintained in the face of the growing wealth and knowledge of the commons, were now rapidly driving the country toward revolution. An eager, inventive, fertile, and brilliant spirit, of boundless audacity, nerve, and coolness, came to the front; and, first by open conflict with the corrupt judiciary of the land, and then by bold dramatic lessons, did more to open the eyes of the people to the true state of affairs than any other one man. This was Beaumarchais. In the course of his long law-suit against Goëzman, a Counsellor of the Maupeou Parlement, he clearly set before the world the monstrous character of that justice which should have been the last and sure resort of the oppressed. He took to the theatre the same gayly mocking, penetrating wit, taking society to pieces with the scalpel of an Aristophanes and showing the sores that were eating into every vital part.

The philosophic spirit was already reigning on



the boards, as in every department of literature. Tragedy was full of tirades against fanaticism; comedy sparkled with epigrammatic sayings that cut at the root of authority. But Beaumarchais was bolder, wittier, more terribly iconoclastic than his fore-runners. His Figaro was the very incarnation of the spirit of revolution. It is amazing that an arbitrary government tottering on the verge of ruin should have been so mad as to have permitted the representation of the *Mariage de Figaro*.

Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-1799) was the son of a watchmaker and began his career in the same business. Inventing a new kind of escapement, he had to maintain his right to the invention before the Academy of Sciences. This was his first law-suit. Making himself useful to the King's daughters by his skill on the harp and the guitar, he was recommended by them to Pâris-Duverney, one of Louis XV.'s ministers. Showing himself gifted in the management of financial matters, he was warmly befriended by that minister, whose kindness he rewarded by securing what Pâris-Duverney had during nine years been longing for, namely, a visit from Louis to the *École Militaire*, which the minister had created and for which he desired the prestige of royal commendation. Beaumarchais persuaded the princesses to visit the school, and the apathetic monarch was then induced to follow their example. In favor with the court, and made wealthy by marriage, Beaumarchais now began to devote himself to literature. His first play, *Eugénie*, proving successful, he followed it up with *Les Deux Amis*, which was not so well received. They are serious pieces, very different in spirit from those which we now most naturally associate with the name of the gay and brilliant Beaumarchais.

He was interrupted in his dramatic writing by his two famous suits, the one against De la Blache, the heir of Pâris-Duverney, the other against Goës-

man, the Counsellor of the Maupeou Parliament. Fifteen louis intended to bribe the Counsellor, and imprudently retained by his wife, were the cause of this last suit. Those wonderful *Mémoires*, in which he convulsed the country with laughter or moved it to bitter indignation, at will—in which he mingled all the witty turns of comedy with the invective of a splendid eloquence—in which he ruined the reputation of his judges and made his own, though he lost his case, taught Beaumarchais where his true strength lay, and made him give up forever the serious drama—except in the third piece of his Figaro trilogy, *La Mère Coupable*—and turn his attention to comedy.

*Le Barbier de Séville* was at first only a comic opera, filled with pretty Italian and Spanish airs which Beaumarchais had picked up in his travels. The Italian comedians refused it, the chief actor having once been a barber and objecting to appear in the too familiar character of Figaro. The French players accepted it, but it failed at the first representation. Beaumarchais cut it down from five acts to four, and then it had a brilliant success. Few comedies are so amusing. Its successor, *La Folle Journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro*, is also amusing, but richer in intrigue, more definitely political in its tone and allusions, and bolder in its revelations of the ingrained immorality and inveterate clinging to the oppressive privileges which characterized the French noblesse of that age. It was immensely popular. There were more than a hundred successive representations. This success was perhaps as much due to the delight which the public took in the many indecent situations which occur in the play, as to their comprehension of the political satire and sympathy with its bitter pungency. The king and the court understood the attacks on all existing institutions put into Figaro's mouth; and the play was at first prohibited. For four years Beaumarchais, with his usual persever-

ance, struggled against this resolution of the government. He was so persistent that at last the government yielded; and the laugh that Figaro raised was in the course of a very few years changed to the ringing notes of the *Ça Ira* and the *Marseillaise*. "It is only little men who fear little writings," he had made Figaro say; and the king and every courtier feared to be classed among these "little men."

Not quite half a century later, Legaré, then United States' Minister at Brussels, jots down in his diary a conversation with Prince Auguste d'Arenberg about Goinon's *Mémoires*, in which mention is made of the prodigious *run* of the *Marriage of Figaro*. The Prince remarked: "The other evening they acted this same piece, the impression made by which, half a century ago, I so well remember; on our boards, it fell lifeless as it were. The subject was out of date. What was bold then, is now *banal*—what hit most forcibly, has, through subsequent changes, become inapplicable. In short nothing could be more flat. The famous monologue of the great barber was received without one token of effect."

The Revolution of the English Colonies in America now began, and Beaumarchais undertook to furnish arms and supplies to the colonies. He carried on this financial operation under the disguise of a Spanish mercantile house, and was exceedingly useful to the Americans at a critical period. He never recovered the whole of the sum due him in this business, and it was not until many years after his death that the Congress of the United States paid the amount to his heirs.

A few years before the Revolution of 1789, he undertook a complete edition of Voltaire's works, and lost an immense sum by it. During the Revolution, he lost the rest of his fortune by bad speculations, came very near losing his life, was imprisoned for a time, and afterward became a refugee.

Returning to France when a time of comparative quiet had come, he wrote an account of his experiences in *Mes Six Époques* and a powerful but rather painful comedy of intrigue—almost a tragi-comedy—entitled *L'Autre Tartuffe, ou La Mère Coupable*, in which the Almayiva family, Figaro, and Suzanne are once more introduced. This was represented for the first time at Théâtre du Marais the 26th of June, 1792. Nearly seven years later Beaumarchais died suddenly and without sickness.

His *Tarare* was an opera of no great merit. He was not skilled in verse-making, and all his plays are in prose. He made some songs of which the best is *Robin*, but he was only moderately successful in this department. His fame must rest on the pleadings in the Goëzman case and the wit and boldness of Figaro in the two comedies produced before the Revolution, in which he figures. Even Figaro is not himself in *La Mère Coupable*.

Among those who made their reputation before the Revolution and perished under Jacobin rule, was Bailly.

Jean Sylvain Bailly (1736–1793), born in Paris, was eminent in science and literature. His earlier works were on astronomical subjects. He also produced for the Academy of Sciences eloquent *Éloges* on Charles V., Molière, Corneille, Lacaille, Leibnitz, Cook, and Gresset. He was prominent in the early stages of the Revolution, as President of the National Assembly and afterwards as Mayor of Paris; but, refusing to give way to the populace when they proceeded to violence, he became unpopular. While with his friend, La Place, at Melun, he was seized, brought to Paris, accused of being a royalist, condemned, and executed. His *Memoirs* were published after his death.

Jean Baptist Louvet de Couvray (1760–1797), the author of *Faustas*, that romance of ill-fame, but also of a remarkably pure tale, *Emilie de Vermont*, barely escaped the guillotine in Robespierre's time.

## XV.

### CHATEAUBRIAND AND MADAME DE STAEL.

I HAVE nothing to do here with the stormy scenes of the French Revolution. Nor need I stop to dwell upon the metaphysical oratory of the Girondists and the blood-thirsty declamations of the Mountain, the horrible *Carmagnoles* of Barère, and the paper Constitutions of the Abbé Sieyès. The successive oratorical triumphs of Mirabeau, of Danton, and of Robespierre belong to the province of the historian. Such men have no place in a sketch of literature. Only those actors in the scenes of revolutionary change, such as Bailly and General Dumouriez, who left Memoirs behind them, are entitled to literary mention.

The great literary names of the Napoleonic period are those of the Emperor's declared enemies, Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël. Napoleon gathered eminent scientific men around him; and of these something must be said. But we can better pursue the thread of literary development by taking up first the purely literary producers of this transitional period.

François-René, Vicomte de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), was born at St. Malo, in Bretagne, and was educated at the College of Rennes. In his Memoirs, he describes vividly the terrible life of isolation in which he grew up, under the stern discipline of his father, in the sombre castle of Combourg. Born and bred in that province in which more than anywhere else in France the noble still maintained unquestioned state and the priest still commanded reverence, he was to witness more

strikingly than most men the contrast between feudal and revolutionary France.

In early life he was procured a commission as sub-lieutenant in the regiment of Navarre. He took leave of his father at the old castle, never to see him again. Arrived in Paris, his brother insisted on presenting him at Court, and he records in his *Memoirs* the impressions made on him by his first sight of that Court, which was so soon to be brought face to face with the prison and the guillotine. After a brief stay in Bretagne, he was once more in Paris and at Court after the opening of the States-General in the fatal year, 1789. He gives a graphic picture of the confused and disorderly condition of Parisian society at this time. The army sympathizing with the people, the regiment of Navarre soon became involved in the general defection. Its colonel, the Marquis of Mortemart, with most of the officers, emigrated; but Chateaubriand withdrew from the service, took up a scheme for getting up an expedition to search for the Northwest passage, and set out for America.

Wandering in the wilds of America, and at the same time poring over the kindling rhapsodies of Rousseau, he received profound impressions both from the grandeur and awful wildness of nature in the primeval forests of the New World and from the impassioned fervor of the wandering Genevese. But both impressions swayed his genius too much in one direction, and produced in him that straining after effect which was his bane. The result was that in all his works he gave way so much to the temptation to make fine pictures that, on the whole, he must be regarded as no more than a grand rhetorician. His political pamphlets, with all their inconsistencies, must be considered his ablest productions, as they are in the main free from the rhapsodical finery with which, in the effort to embellish, he really marred the purity of his style in his more

labored works. The language in these is clear, firm and energetic.

Reading, while still in this country, in an English paper which fell into his hands in the hut of an American backwoodsman near the Blue Mountains, the account of the flight of Louis XVI. to Varennes, he at once returned to France. Joining the "Army of the Princes," wounded at the disastrous siege of Thionville, and left for dead in a ditch, he eventually escaped to England, where he lived by giving lessons in French, writing for Peltier—the newspaper man whom Mackintosh afterwards defended for his "libel" on Napoleon—and translating obscure pamphlets. He almost died, however, of starvation, during the bitter experiences of these early London days. It was in London, nevertheless, that he published his first work. This was an essay *Sur les Révolutions anciennes et modernes, considérées dans leurs Rapports avec la Révolution Française*. The tone of this work was skeptical, and its political principles republican. But the skepticism, which had been prompted by personal sufferings, soon passed away. In 1800, he returned to France, and wrote for the *Mercure*, publishing in this journal his romance of *Atala*, with a preface in which he took occasion to eulogize the First Consul.

The following year, he still further pleased the Head of the State by the publication of his *Génie du Christianisme*, which chimed in well with Napoleon's desire to propitiate the Church and to re-establish public worship in France. Both these works were welcomed with delight by the public. A burst of enthusiasm was accorded his *Genius of Christianity*. The criticism of Fontanes, in an article which appeared in the *Moniteur Universelle* at the time the work was published, is on the whole just and accurate: "The author has aimed at presenting, not the theological proofs of religion, but

the picture of its benefits; he appeals rather to the feelings than to the reason."

*Atala* and *René* are both episodes in an extended romance called *Les Natchez*, and were published before it. The story of *Atala* gives a vivid picture of fanaticism in the wild forest world. Its faults are the extravagance of the language and the straining after pathetic effects. "*René*," says De Véricour, "is the personification of one of those moral maladies which so often assail human nature, blighting all freshness and vigor in the soul. René is the type of morbid reverie—of the bitterness resulting from social inaction, blended with a proud scorn and self-satisfaction. His haughty and solitary soul finds in disdain an inexplicable source of superiority over all men and things."

A favorite now with Napoleon, Chateaubriand was sent by him to Rome as Secretary of Legation; and, later, he was made ambassador to the little republic of Valais. When, however, the execution of the Duc d'Enghien took place, Chateaubriand resigned his post and retired from public life in disgust.

Two years later, he went on an eastern tour, visiting Greece, Palestine, Egypt, and Carthage, and returning to France by way of Spain. The literary fruit of this trip was his *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*. *Les Martyrs* had been given to the world a year or so before.

After the first fall of Napoleon, he issued his brilliant pamphlet *Sur Bonaparte et les Bourbons*, full of fierce invective against the fallen giant, and throbbing with all the rancor of furious party-spirit. It may be compared with the anti-Cæsarian temper of Cicero after the assassination of the great Emperor.

After the battle of Waterloo, Chateaubriand became Minister of State under Louis XVIII. His *Monarchie selon la Charte* was intended to give popularity to the cause of the Bourbons, but its



insistence upon the sacredness of the charter gave offense to the stubborn and wrongheaded fanatics of royalty whom it sought to defend. At last he became as obnoxious to the Court, as Clarendon became to that of Charles II. when its dislike to honesty and good counsel grew extreme; and he was dismissed from office.

He had begun his *Mémoires d'outre Tombe* as far back as in 1811, in the retirement of a little country-house, near the village of Aulnay. But this work was frequently interrupted by the cares of political life, and the greater part of it was reserved for the employment of his later years.

In 1826, he prepared the first edition of his collected works. His publisher gave him for the copyright of this edition 600,000 francs; but Chateaubriand returned 100,000.

When the "Revolution of July" came (in 1830), he was staying at Dieppe with that famous queen of the salon, Madame de Récamier, who idolized him somewhat as Mrs. Thrale idolized Dr. Johnson. He hastened at once to Paris. But on the elevation of Louis Philippe to the throne, he refused to take the oath of allegiance. After this event he wrote several other political pamphlets, such as *De la Restauration et de la Monarchie Elective*, and *Du Bannissement de la Famille de Charles X.*; his *Histoire du Congrès de Vérone*; his *Études historiques*; an *Essai sur la Littérature anglaise*; a very poor translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*; and the *Mémoires d'outre Tombe*, remarkable for the cruel personalities and pitiless egotism which have in our day been the distinguishing traits of Carlyle's last remains. Sainte-Beuve, in his *Critiques et Portraits Littéraires*, has described in his lively style the readings given of the first part of these Memoirs before the brilliant circle that was wont to gather at the Abbaye-aux-bois in 1834.

French critics rank Chateaubriand as the great-

est colorist and the most harmonious prose writer in their literature. His political career was certainly full of apparent inconsistencies. But his aim seems to have been to uphold a constitutional government in France, and both the legitimist and the republican extremists of his time made that an impossibility.

I have spoken of Madame de Récamier's devotion to him in his later days. Some space should be devoted to this famous woman, who represented in her day the sort of influence exercised in earlier French society by the *ruelles* of the Marquise de Rambouillet and the *salons* of the Duchesse du Maine and of Madame d'Houdetot. She belongs to literature through the literary atmosphere to which her fascinating powers acted as a sort of electric gathering point, as well as in virtue of the *Souvenirs et Correspondance tirés des Papiers de Madame Récamier*.

Jeanne Françoise Julie Adelaïde Bernard Récamier (1777-1849), daughter of a banker of Lyon, and wife of a rich banker many years older than herself, was beautiful in person and endowed with wonderful grace and charm. She was the warm friend of Madame de Staël, and, in his later years, of Chateaubriand. When he lost his wife, Chateaubriand tried to induce Madame de Récamier, who had for many years been a widow, to marry him. But she preferred their old relations of friendship. Sainte-Beuve has described these relations in his fine manner; and, though I have not room for the entire passage, a sketch based upon it will not be out of place here.

Hers was a salon in which met, under a most charming influence, the most illustrious characters of the age. Chateaubriand reigned there, and, when he was present, everything took its cue and color from him. He was not always there, however. There was talk in that company on all subjects, always with the air of private confidence,

and in tones less loud than elsewhere. There was nothing commonplace there. But the air of reserve, which belonged to its gentle spirit of discretion and good taste, was tempered by a general kindliness by which the new-comer felt himself put at his ease and was made one of the social "initiated." Familiarity was preserved from any descent into those liberties, which it is prone to, by the air of distinction which the manners of all insensibly took in that gracious presence. The charming mistress of the house knew how to throw an expression of interest—not insincere, for her ready sympathies really went out to each guest—into her reception of every remark. She had that quick bright look and smile of comprehension, which to all who essay parlor conversation must always be so winning. No one visited there without taking away a gratified sense of having pleased by some good expression, indicating excellence of head or heart. This delicate flattery was the most powerful of her charms. If Chateaubriand was the pride of her salon, she herself was the soul of it. There was no form of distinction which she did not woo to her little salon of the Abbaye; and, once charmed to her presence, it was sure to be put in a good light there and with fit surroundings, so as to feel at home and proud to own allegiance to the queen of a society so congenial.

She had also that tact, that practical sagacity, which creates usages from the simplest observation, surprising secrets that common experience offers, but which conventional art so easily ignores. A little story I have read somewhere illustrates this well. Some one is said to have remarked her surprise that even strangers seemed to feel at once at their ease in Madame de Récamier's salon, and that the very furniture had a cosy look about it, seats of various kinds falling into natural groups before the room was half filled. "Why," said Madame de Récamier, "it is very simple. When a really con-

genial party has spent the evening here, I order the room to be left undisturbed. The furniture is best arranged for friendly intercourse, just as they have left it."

Of this society Chateaubriand, in the twenty years which remained to them both, was the centre, the great interest of her life, the interest to which she subordinated everything. He had his antipathies, his aversions, his bitternesses. She it was who soothed, and tried to temper and correct this querulous side of his old age. She had the tact to make him talk when he was too prone to silence, to imagine good-natured speeches for him which no doubt he had made in privacy but did not seem inclined to utter before witnesses. She had the address to stir him up even into gaiety. She could stimulate him into his finer moods and fire him into trains of thought that made him eloquent.

It was, then, to this glorious woman—a creature gifted with a genius for sympathy and a social magnetism of marvelous sweetness and power—that Chateaubriand owed all the happiness of his declining years. He lived to witness the opening scenes of the Revolution of 1848. Louis de Loménie, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for mid-July, 1848, describes his dying hours thus :

"M. de Chateaubriand departed at a moment when the sophisms and the errors which he had combated all his life through were causing blood to flow in our streets. The battle of June—that terrible convulsion, which threatened to carry away not alone the republic, but also society itself—was the torment of his latest days. Seated before his open windows, and already enfeebled by the approach of death, he was to be seen, pale, silent, and sombre, his head bowed upon his breast, listening to the distant rumblings of civil war. Every cannon-shot drew from him sighs and groans ; but he was still permitted, whilst deploring the necessity of the combat, to rejoice in the victory ; and to quit us without despairing of the futurity of France."

It was well for his peace of mind that he did not live a few years longer, to witness the establishment of the second Empire.

Madame de Récamier's friend of earlier days, the other great Frenchwoman of the Napoleonic age, and Chateaubriand's compeer in the literary field, was the Baronne de Staël-Holstein.

Anne-Marie Louise Germaine Necker (1766–1817) was a woman of remarkable powers, a writer whose mingled charms of thought, sentiment, and fancy give her deserved eminence in the literature of France. Her father was that able and honest Jacques Necker, citizen of Geneva and banker of Paris, who was thrice called to the post of Comptroller-General of the Finances in the ruinous days of the monarchy on the eve of the Revolution, and whose splendid economic abilities would have saved the country from coming horrors, had he not been over-ruled by an infatuated Court. Her mother was that beautiful and accomplished Mademoiselle Susanne Curchod, whose hand Gibbon resigned in obedience to the will of his father, during the days of his early training at Lausanne.

Necker was something more than a great banker and a brilliant master of political economy. He was a man who had an enlightened taste for what was best in literature and society; and his house was open at all times to the most remarkable men of the day. His daughter was therefore at an early age under impressions well fitted to develop in her intellectual tastes of a high order. The strictness of her mother's ideas made it difficult for her to sympathize with a child of fervid temperament, bred in a hot-house atmosphere of sentiment and speculative thought. For, the young girl was from the first a creature of impulsive and ardent genius. At the age of twelve, she wrote a play, which was acted by herself and some of her young friends. Her remarkable conversational powers, even in childhood, attracted the attention of the eminent

men who came to her father's house. She not only listened eagerly to the talk of such men as Gibbon, Marmontel, Grimm, and the Abbé Raynal; but she was petted by them and encouraged to join in their conversation. Her father, too, was fond of talking to her on themes which it would have seemed absurd to touch upon with most children of her age. He was proud of her intellect, and aimed to infuse into her his own lofty views and thoughtful philosophy of life. From this familiar and affectionate intercourse sprang that devoted love and pride with which through life she regarded the memory of her father. The warmest feelings of her nature seem to have been lavished upon him. Had she possessed the gift of beauty, in addition to her other gifts, she might have been wooed with ardor enough to awaken her heart to the passion of love. But, being ugly, her heart was never warmed into the fulness of life, and her vivacious intellect usurped all the intensity of purpose and fire of brilliant energy which might otherwise have been developed in her affections.

She made one of those matches called in the heartless societies of cities a *mariage de convenance*, in a cool and business-like spirit. Being herself a great heiress, she could afford to dispense with money in her choice. Her mother insisted that she should marry a Protestant, and her father chose for her Eric, Baron de Staël-Holstein, an *attaché* to the Swedish embassy, who was expected to become ambassador himself. The fact that he would reside permanently in Paris was perhaps the greatest inducement to the match. The Baron was a handsome man, though twice her age, was of noble birth, and bore a fair character. But there is little reason to believe that this girl of twenty, who had wept over Clarissa Harlowe, had a spark of love to give him. She married to have a proper establishment in Paris, and to open a salon of her own, in which she would be the acknowledged queen of a

brilliant circle. Swiss by blood, she was yet almost a typical Frenchwoman in her vivacity, her gift for conversation, and her brilliant fancy. That she added to these charms a masculine vigor of thought, mingled from time to time with the play of witty repartee and graceful sally, only enhanced the attractiveness of her salon by making it unique.

Her first literary work, the *Lettres sur Rousseau*, belongs to this period, and shows that she, like Chateaubriand, had received her earliest and profoundest impressions from the impassioned sentimentalist of Geneva. Fervid in style, and important as an indication of tendency, this production is yet immature and far from indicating the powers displayed in her later works.

The avalanche of revolution soon came, to throw these days of triumph forever into a past as remote almost to memory as those of the fabled Age of Gold. But the troubles that swept over society, involving Necker and his people in the common ruin, served to bring out the better qualities in Madame de Staël's nature. Her father had failed to reconcile or satisfy the contending Court and People, and had retired to Coppet in Switzerland. From that retreat he sent pamphlet after pamphlet of warning into the France he had striven so hard to save, and which had so often rejected his counsels. But there were none to heed his words. She, as Necker's daughter and an ambassador's wife, possessed for a while, in the midst of that seething sea of furious humanity, personal security and some influence. She tried to get the royal family secretly to England. She tried to save the Queen's life—though she had never been a favorite with Marie Antoinette—by her *Réflexions sur le Procès de la Reine, par Une Femme*. She hid some of the proscribed in her house. She prevailed upon some of the revolutionary chiefs to grant mercy in a few instances. After Robespierre's death, she published

two pamphlets in favor of peace, one of which was praised by Pitt in the English Parliament.

When at last it was evident that no more was to be done, she joined her friends in England, while her husband took refuge in Holland so as to be ready at once to resume his diplomatic functions upon the coming of a lull in the revolutionary fury. Her fellow refugees in England were Talleyrand, De Narbonne—whose life she had saved—and the D'Arblay who afterwards married Miss Burney, the author of *Evelina*. The exiles were very poor, but not very unhappy, in spite of the stupid insular coldness of their English neighbors, who did not understand the intimacy of Madame de Staël and De Narbonne, and talked slanderous gossip about them.

When something like regular government was re-established in France, the Baronde Staël resumed his post as ambassador in Paris; and his wife passed her time agreeably enough for some years, living alternately with her father at Coppet and with her husband at Paris.

But when Napoleon became the ruling power in France, his perception of the fact that she would always indignantly oppose his successive steps towards absolutism made him resolute to keep at least her social influence outside of the game. He first prohibited her residence in Paris, and ended by exiling her from France altogether. They were not only thoroughly antipathetic natures; but it is evident from her *Considérations sur la Révolution Française*, that she read his character earlier and better than any one else—read it as the world is only recently beginning to understand it—and that his keen eye perceived this fact and his prompt will decided him to be rid at once of what was likely to be a real and great danger. She was never blind to his transcendent genius; and that she was not dazzled by it to the point of ignoring even for a moment his monstrous



egotism, is a wonderful proof of the clearness of her vision.

Before the final edict of the First Consul had banished her from France, she had greatly increased her literary reputation by the publication of her work *Sur la Littérature considérée dans ses Rapports avec l'Etat Moral et Politique des Nations*, and her romance of *Delphine*. The "Literature considered in its Connection with Social Institutions" is a work of real philosophic merit. In this treatise, "all her efforts are directed to one end—to show that there is a progress; that the advance of knowledge has been real and constant, in spite of vicissitudes; that we can trace the law of the moral improvement of man through all the obscurities of time; and that the human race is tending, however slowly, towards a state of perfection."

*Delphine* is a romance full of eloquence and passion, but tarnished with more than doubtful morality. Indeed, it was denounced as highly immoral by the court journals of the day, though their adverse criticisms were prompted by the wish to seize any and every excuse for putting a ban upon her and her father, who about this time incurred Napoleon's enmity by the publication of his "Last Political and Financial Views."

She took greatly to heart her exile from her beloved Paris. In the lovely scenes of her residence at Geneva, with the beautiful Lake before her eyes, she exclaimed: "O for the rivulet in the Rue du Bac! I would rather live in Paris in the fourth story and with a hundred a year. I do not dissemble: a residence in Paris has always appeared to me the most desirable of all. I was born there; I passed my childhood and my early youth there. It is there alone that I can find any trace of the generation that knew my father, of the friends with whom I underwent the dangers of the Revolution. French conversation exists only in Paris, and conversation has been, since my infancy, my greatest pleasure."

Such are the feelings that she expresses and dwells upon again and again, in her *Dix Années d'Exil*.

During Napoleon's absence in the north at the time he was planning an invasion of England, she ventured to go to a little country-seat of hers some ten leagues from Paris. But her inexorable enemy became aware of her presence and ruthlessly ordered her to remove to a distance of forty leagues from Paris. In spite of the zealous intercessions in her favor of Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte, this mandate was put in force, and she was obliged to shift from place to place, under the odious pressure of the gendarmes. She could not long remain in France, or even in Switzerland, and decided on going to Germany. Joseph Bonaparte gave her letters of introduction for Berlin, and she set out, accompanied by her devoted friend, Benjamin Constant.

At Weimar, she enjoyed the society of Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and the Duke and Duchess of Weimar; studied the German language and literature; and took notes for the great work in which she was to reveal this new world of thought to the French. At Berlin, she heard the news of the death of the Duc d'Enghien; and it was here also that the intelligence reached her, a little later, of the prostration of her father. She hastened to go to him, but was informed of his death before reaching the confines of Germany. Reaching Switzerland in an agony of grief and self-reproach at her absence from him who had always been her idol, her first desire was to pen a suitable tribute to his memory. Her *Vie privée de M. Necker*, though naturally the over-strained estimate of a too partial biographer, is a singularly touching memoir.

From Switzerland she went to Italy, and on her return composed, while residing alternately at Coppet and Geneva, her *Corinne, ou l'Italie*. As a story, it has always seemed to me a wretched failure, the characters morbid and their conduct affected and aimless, the whole conception of their relations un-

real in the extreme. But, as a picture of Italy, as an impassioned and eloquent delineation of that sunny land, the home of art and beauty, its charm is undoubtedly great; and the enthusiasm with which it was written, the deep melancholy which rests like a lovely veil over its richest bits of coloring, the excellence of its criticisms on art and literature, combined to give it a prodigious success. It was, however, only the Italy of history, the Italy of a glorious past and a rich inheritance in genius, that she found so near her heart and took such delight in painting. She had little relish for nature's charms. She said once to Molé, the author of *Essais de Morale et de Politique*, "If it were not for respect due to public opinion, I would not open my window to see the Bay of Naples; while I would travel five hundred miles to talk with a man of ability."

She now took up her residence in Vienna, and there busied herself in collecting materials for her great work, *De l'Allemagne*, a picture of German morals, literature, and philosophy. This is the most ambitious, the most highly labored, and perhaps the ablest of her writings. The judgment of Sir James Mackintosh on it is, that it is "probably the most elaborate and masculine production of the faculties of woman." He asks, "What woman, indeed, or, we may add, how many men, could have preserved all the grace and brilliancy of Parisian society in analyzing its nature—explained the most abstruse and metaphysical theories of Germany precisely, yet perspicuously and agreeably—and combined the eloquence which inspires exalted sentiments of virtue, with the enviable talent of gently indicating the defects of men or of nations, by the skilfully softened touches of a polite and merciful pleasantry?"

Napoleon proscribed this book, as he had persecuted the author. The printed copies were ordered to be seized and burned, and Madame de Staël was

notified that she was banished entirely from France, the letter of the Minister of Police declaring emphatically: "We are not yet reduced to seek for models in the nations you admire."

Her friends, too, were persecuted for her sake. Schlegel, who had been for years the tutor of her two sons, was ordered to quit Geneva and Coppet. De Montmorenci and Madame Récamier were condemned to perpetual exile for the crime of visiting her at Coppet. As Napoleon's power enlarged its circle, she was forced to get farther and farther away. She went to Russia, to Sweden, and to England. In London, she published her work on Germany, as it had been suppressed in Paris.

During this period of her stay in England, Rogers writes to Moore—whose poetry he tells him she greatly admires—in August, 1813, his impressions of her: "Strong feeling delights her most. The death of Clarissa, she says [Richardson's heroine], comes to her constantly as one of the events of her life. Her daughter [the Duchesse de Broglie] you would like; she is very pleasing, and dances a shawl-dance beautifully. The mother, too, you would like—very good-natured, very lively, and eloquent. She speaks English well, but not fluently. Pray come and meet her. She dines with me next Friday."

At last the Restoration came, and she returned to her beloved Paris, occupied herself with writing her *Dix Années d'Exil*, had restitution made her at last of the two million livres due from the royal treasury on her father's account, and, dying at Paris after a vain effort to restore her health by a trip to Italy, was buried at Coppet. Her will revealed the fact that she had secretly married some six years before a young French officer named Rocca, who had been kindly received by her on his coming wounded from Spain to Geneva, and who had conceived a passion for her on account of her kind heart and the charm of her conversation.

Few women have written so ably as she on so many different subjects. To few of her sex has it been given to discuss political, social, philosophical, and literary questions with equal force, wit, and grace. But it may safely be said that no woman has blended as she did the very different gifts of literary skill and conversational ability. The many eminent men whom she met in her career all testify to the brilliancy of her conversation. But all, except her French admirers, agree in hinting or openly declaring that their admiration was not unmingled with decided weariness. She talked too much. Talleyrand, with that marvelous wit of his which has more surprise in it than any one else's, said in his gentlest tones, when taxed with liking to be with Madame Grant after having enjoyed intimacy with Madame de Staël, "One must have been fond of Madame de Staël to get a relish for the happiness of loving a fool." Schiller, in a letter to Goethe full of praise of her, is forced to let fall the sentence, "One's only grievance is the altogether unprecedented glibness of her tongue." Goethe, also full of praise in his *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, charges her with "never granting, on the most important topics, a moment of reflection." Byron's references to her in his private journals are generally complimentary. He liked her and admired her works. In London he saw a good deal of her, and in Switzerland she was kind to him. "In her own house," he says, "she was amiable; in any other person's you wished her gone, and in her own again."

These criticisms go to show that she was somewhat overpowering in general society. But she was a devoted daughter, a staunch friend, a good mother. There was nothing frivolous about her. In her writings she is remarkable for sustained and even impassioned earnestness. Except Talleyrand and Napoleon—neither of whom can be considered typical Frenchmen—her countrymen did not find

her tiresome in conversation. The charm of her enthusiasm almost converted Benjamin Constant from Voltairism. He even testifies that she understood the art of listening and practiced it to perfection :

"Since I know her better," he writes from Switzerland to Madame de Charrière, "I find great difficulty in not praising her incessantly, and in not manifesting to all those to whom I speak my interest and my admiration. I have rarely seen a similar combination of surprising and attractive qualities, so much brilliancy and justice, a benevolence so expansive and so highly cultivated, so much generosity, a politeness so gentle and so uniform in public, so many charms, so much simplicity and freedom in private. She is the second woman I have found who might have taken the place of the whole universe to me, who would have been of herself a world for me; you know who was the first. Madame de Staël has infinitely more wit in intimate conversation than in public; she understands perfectly how to listen, which neither you nor I thought. She feels the wit of others with as much pleasure as her own. She makes those whom she loves valued with an ingenious and constant attention which proves as much kindness as intellect. In a word, she is a being apart, a superior being such as we meet perhaps one in a century, and such that those who approach her, know her, and are her friends, need ask no other happiness."

Surely, the woman who could call forth such a eulogy from a man of Constant's extraordinary abilities and world-weary spirit, must have possessed no ordinary share of goodness as well as charm of mind and manner.

Along with Madame de Staël may be named a lady of far inferior powers, but who, through her *Exiles of Siberia*, is known in all lands. This was Madame Sophie Cottin (1773-1807), whose maiden name was Ristaud. She was born at Tonneins and educated at Bordeaux. Married very early in life to a Parisian banker, she was a childless widow at twenty. She wrote a number of romances, *Claire d'Albe*, *Malvina*, *Amélie Mansfield*, *Mathilde*, *ou Malek Adhel*, and *Elisabeth, ou les Exilés de Sibérie*.

## XVI.

## THE SCIENTIFIC PERIOD.

THE other eminent exiles, who have a place in literature, must first have our attention. We can then pass on to the men of science who illustrated this period.

The twenty-years' friend of Madame de Staël and the impassioned lover of Madame de Récamier when he was nearer fifty than forty—that Benjamin Constant who promised so much and performed so little—was recognized in his day as the most brilliant of talkers. Acute and sparkling in his books; elegant and animated in his letters; pungent, daring, and witty in his speeches from the tribune, he possessed powers which might have given him a noble place in history; but his early loss of faith in anything spoilt him for life. His story is the story of a man of consummate ability whose whole career was marred by his utter lack of serious interest in life. What he did accomplish he owed to the influence of the Baronne de Staël.

Henri Benjamin Constant de Rebeque (1767–1830) was born at Lausanne and educated in Germany and Scotland. In 1796, he published in Paris a pamphlet which won him some reputation as a political thinker. But he had already been many years under the fatal influence of that fair friend, Madame de Charrière, to whom he owed the loss of all true interest in life.

Isabelle de Charrière was the daughter of a Dutch baron, who had married her brother's Swiss teacher, and had written several works, among them *Caliste*. Her beauty and intellectual charms had completely enchained Constant, though she

was nearly thirty years older. In the midst of those great events which were changing the world around him, in that momentous year, 1790, he writes to her a morbid revelation of the nothingness of existence to him. "I see no motives for anything in this world," he says, "and I have no taste for anything." Two years later, he writes to her in the same bitter spirit: "Sick of everything, tired of everything, bitter egotist, with a sort of sensibility which serves only to torment me, fickle to a degree that might well make me pass for mad, subject to fits of melancholy which interrupt all my plans and make me act, while they last, as if I had given up everything ;—how can you expect me to succeed, to please, to live?"

Two years later still, however, he met Madame de Staël in Switzerland. We have already seen how powerfully she impressed him. Her firm convictions of truth and duty did much to cure him of his feverish unbelief, his jaundiced views of life. Her real goodness of heart attached him to her at once and for ever. They lived much in each other's society both at Coppet and in Paris; and, as we have seen, he was her escort on her first visit to Germany. Sainte-Beuve thus describes the life they led together at Coppet:—

"Literary or philosophical conversations, always piquant or elevated, began about eleven in the morning, when they met at breakfast. These were resumed at dinner, continuing until supper, which took place at eleven in the evening, and were often kept up till midnight. Benjamin Constant and Madame de Staël took the lead in the conversation. It was then that Benjamin Constant—who, when younger, we have hitherto seen only *blasé*, substituting for his too inveterate raillery a factitious enthusiasm, always a marvelously witty talker, but with whom wit had ended by inheriting the fire of all the other more powerful faculties and passions—it was then that he showed himself naturally and with spirit what Madame de Staël has proclaimed



him, the first mind in the world; he was certainly the greatest among distinguished men. The minds of these two at least always agreed; they were sure of understanding each other. Nothing, according to witnesses, was so dazzling and superior as their conversation in this choice circle, these two holding the magic *raquette* of discourse and sending backwards and forwards for hours, without ever missing, the *volant* of a thousand interchanged thoughts."

It was through her influence upon him, so much more wholesome than that of Madame de Charrière, that he began that political career in which he labored to some purpose in later days by the side of men like General Foy and Manuel and Lafayette.

Three years after his pamphlet of 1796, Napoleon placed him on the "Tribunat." But he offended the First Consul by the spirit with which he opposed the successive steps towards the assumption of supreme power which Napoleon was now taking, and he was dismissed from office and banished. Accompanying Madame de Staël to Germany, he published in 1813 his famous pamphlet, *Sur l'Esprit de Conquête*. On the fall of Napoleon in 1814, he returned to Paris, where his pen was busy in producing political pamphlets. In these he described Napoleon as a Genghis Khan and his rule as a "government of Mamelukes."

Yet, when the Emperor appeared once more in Paris, he strangely passed over to his side and became one of his Councillors of State. It is now pretty well ascertained—since the publication of his letters to that woman who "understood the art of listening"—that this piece of political tergiversation was due to his mad love for Madame de Récamier, to whom he was now devoting all his powers of persuasion. His motive was simply that he might still live in Paris and be near her. He could have had little real hope of winning her affection by a course so repugnant to her own views,

when his most ardent supplications had been unavailing before, though he had then been writing in the interest of her party. But he seems to have been in despair at the thought of being parted from her, and perhaps he may have believed in the charm of ambition for a heart like hers.

On the return of the Bourbons, he wrote so able an exculpation of his conduct to Louis XVIII., that he was readily pardoned. A friend remarking to him: "So, your memorial has succeeded! It has persuaded the King," "I don't wonder," said Constant; "it almost persuaded my own self!"

In 1818, the Chamber of Deputies witnessed the appearance, as members, of three men greatly dreaded by the favorers of absolute government. These were Lafayette, Manuel, and Constant. Later, the liberal party mustered also such able men as Foy, Laffitte, and Dupont-de-l'Eure; and, later still, Casimir Perier.

Constant's eloquent oratory, his keen perception, his pungent wit, and his brilliant readiness as a pamphleteer, made him a valued leader of the liberal party. He died shortly after the revolution which drove Charles X. from the throne. He had been twice married, having been divorced from his first wife. His whole career was singularly influenced by women.

Among his works are his *Discours Prononcés à la Chambre des Députés*, his *Cours de Politique Constitutionnelle*, his *Mémoires sur les Cent Jours*, and his *De la Religion considérée dans sa Source, ses Formes, et ses Développements*, which was not wholly published until after his death. It was of the book on religion that the story is told of Constant's answering, when a friend asked him how he could reconcile the statements of his latter volumes with those of his first, published so long ago: "There is nothing that can be arranged so easily as facts." This book, which is in five volumes, occupied him at intervals for thirty years. It is said to have

been planned and the outline of it written on the backs of packs of playing cards. As a supplement to this, he wrote his *Du Polythéisme Romain, considérée dans ses Rapports avec la Philosophie Grecque et la Religion Chrétienne*.

He seems to have had the same faculty of tiring out the patience of his English friends, as his beloved paragon, Madame de Staël; for Thomas Moore tells an amusing story, in one of his journals, of Lord Lansdowne's escape from hearing him read a novel, by adroitly making use of Madame Constant's cat to cover his abrupt departure.

There were other exiles, besides these more eminent ones, who did literary work of some importance. Among these were the brothers De Maistre and General Dumouriez.

The Comte Joseph De Maistre (1753-1821) was born at Chambéry, of a noble French family which had settled in Savoy. During the occupation of Savoy by the French in 1792, he withdrew from the country. When his king retired to the island of Sardinia, the only part of his dominions where he could still exercise sovereignty, De Maistre joined his court there, and was sent as ambassador to Saint Petersburg in 1803. There he remained until 1817, when he was recalled to Turin, to fill high posts at home. His later years were spent in his native country. His only title to a place in the history of French literature rests on the fact that his excellent works were written in French.

His first work was his *Considérations sur la France*, which appeared in 1796. Later, he produced an essay *Sur le Principe Générateur des Constitutions Politiques*, his work *Du Pape*, that *De l'Eglise Gallicane*, and the work by which he is now chiefly known, *Les Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg*. This last work is full of elevated thoughts and is written with great spirit and liveliness. It has done good service in the cause of the religious party; but the defect of De Maistre, as an influence on the

Catholic side, is that he represents the most arbitrary and inflexible school of thought. Toleration and conciliation are ideas beyond his sphere. To the works already mentioned, must be added a posthumous publication, *Examen de la Philosophie de Bacon*, as well as the *Lettres et Opuscules*.

His brother, Xavier De Maistre, (1764–1852), who was also born at Chambéry, took refuge in Russia during the revolutionary storm, and entered the Russian military service, in which he rose to the rank of general. Literature, science, and the fine arts were, however, the chief occupations of his life. He was successful in both prose and poetry, was a fine landscape painter and an able chemist and physician. During a visit to Italy in 1794, while busying himself with studies in water-color painting and India-ink drawing, he began, as a sort of relaxation, the work on which his fame chiefly rests, his *Voyage autour de ma Chambre*, in which the thoughts are no less charming than the style. He also wrote *Le Lépreux de la Vallée d'Aoste*, *Le Prisonnier du Caucase*, *Prascovie ou la Jeune Sibérienne*, and *L'Expédition nocturne autour de ma Chambre*. He died at Saint-Petersburg.

General Dumouriez belongs to literature only through his memoirs, which are indeed very entertaining.

Charles François Dumouriez (1799–1823) was born at Cambrai, served in Germany during the Seven Years' War and in the occupation of Corsica by the French; held the office of commandant of Cherbourg under Louis XVI.; joined the Jacobin Club during the revolutionary period; led the French revolutionary army in its earlier campaigns; won the victory of Jemappes, in which the Austrians were badly defeated; began to distrust the political heads of the revolution in Paris; opened negotiations with the Austrian general; tried to bring the army over to his views when ordered by the home government to return to Paris and stand his trial;

failed in this effort, and escaped to the ranks of the enemy. The Convention set a price of 300,000 francs on his head. He wandered about Europe, and finally settled in England, where he died. His later years were employed in writing his *Mémoires*.

Dumont, the pupil of Bentham after having been the co-adjutor of Mirabeau, also spent a large part of his life in England.

Pierre Étienne Louis Dumont (1759–1825) was born at Geneva, became a Protestant minister in that city; went to Saint Petersburg to take charge of the French Protestant church there; passed from there to England; formed a strong alliance with the Whigs; repaired to Paris at the outbreak of the Revolution; became very intimate with Mirabeau and wrote the ablest speeches delivered by that brilliant declaimer; returned to England in 1791; attached himself to the famous utilitarian philosopher and legislative reformer, Jeremy Bentham, and ultimately translated to the world into perspicuous French the incoherent and involved English in which that strong thinker, but most muddy writer, put his ideas.

Dumont published in Geneva, successively, his *Traité de Législation Civile et Pénale*, his *Théorie des Peines et des Récompenses*, his *Tactique des Assemblées Législatives*, his *Preuves Judiciaires* and his *Organisation Judiciaire et Codification*, the last appearing after his death. Another posthumous work was his *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau et sur les deux premières Assemblées Législatives*. He died at Milan. Macaulay, in reviewing Dumont's Recollections of Mirabeau, pays him a handsome tribute:

“M. Dumont,” he writes, “was one of those persons, the care of whose fame belongs in an especial manner to mankind, for he was one of those persons who have, for the sake of mankind, neglected the care of their own fame. . . . Possessed of talents and acquirements which made him great, he wished only to be useful. In the

prime of manhood, at the very time of life at which ambitious men are most ambitious, he was not solicitous to proclaim that he furnished information, arguments, and eloquence to Mirabeau. In his later years he was perfectly willing that his renown should merge in that of Mr. Bentham."

The literary strength of France, as has been seen, lay in this age with those whom Napoleon could not win to his side. Those who submitted to the Empire could point to no such literary names as Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël, and the De Maistres, among their number. But there was some literary ability enlisted on the side of the Empire also. If Napoleon failed to propitiate Madame de Staël and Madame de Récamier, he had on his pension list a literary woman of very different character in Madame de Genlis. If he could not command the eloquence of Chateaubriand and the grace of the De Maistres, he had the science of Champollion, Cuvier, Fourier, De Sacy, Arago, Gay-Lussac, Fresnel, and Ampère, and the dramatic skill of Andrieux, Legouvé, Arnault, Étienne, Desaugiers, and Lemercier, to give splendor to his reign.

Stéphanie Félicité, Comtesse de Genlis (1746-1830) was born at Champcéry, near Autun, in Burgundy, of an old but improverished family. Born Mademoiselle Ducrest, she married at fifteen the Comte de Genlis, and became a member of the household of the Duchesse de Chartres, wife of that prince who was afterwards known as *Égalité*. Appointed to train his children, she wrote a number of works for them, *Théâtre à l'usage des Jeunes Personnes*, *Adèle et Théodore ou Lettres sur l'Éducation*, *Les Veillées du Château ou Cours de Morale à l'usage des Enfants*. Like that scandal of the house of Orleans, for whom she compromised her reputation, she showed sympathy with the revolutionary party in the early stages of the great movement; but she was soon obliged to take refuge in Belgium,

Going later to Switzerland, and from there to Altona in Germany, she wrote during her stay there a romance called *Les Chevaliers du Cygne ou la Cour de Charlemagne*, and a pamphlet entitled *Précis de la Conduite de Madame de Genlis pendant la Révolution*.

On Napoleon's becoming Consul, she returned to Paris, and accepted a pension. Residing in Paris until her death, she produced a number of sketches of fashionable life: her *Observations Critiques pour servir à l'Histoire Littéraire du 19me siècle*, her *Dictionnaire Critique et Raisonné des Etiquettes de la Cour, des Usages du Monde, etc.*, and her *Dîners du Baron d'Holbach*. After reaching her eightieth year, she composed her *Mémoires*. There is much malicious gossip in all these later works; and her "moral" stories, once so popular, are as far from being immaculate as was her private character.

Jurisprudence, practical science, and the stage were all given a considerable share of Napoleon's attention. Assembling the chief lawyers of the land, with Cambacérès at their head, he committed to them the great undertaking of compiling a code for France. Their deliberations produced the *Code Civil des Français*, the *Code de Procédure*, the *Code Pénal*, the *Code d'Instruction Criminelle*, and commercial and military codes. Much of this legislation is still in force.

Cuvier, though submitting to the Empire, was in no sense a partisan, but simply an eminent scientist who lived calmly through that period and worked on undisturbed after the fall of Napoleon.

Georges Chrétien Léopold Dagobert, Baron Cuvier (1769-1832), was born at Mömpelgard, then a town of Würtemberg. Early evincing a passion for natural history, educated at Stuttgart, becoming private tutor in the family of the Comte d'Héricy near Fécamp in Normandy, making the acquaintance of Geoffrey St. Hilaire and other eminent Parisian scientists, appointed through their in-

fluence professor in the École Centrale of the Panthéon, becoming soon after assistant to Mertrud in the study of comparative anatomy at the Jardin des Plantes, he rose to distinction as a master in scientific investigation. Succeeding Daubenton in the Collège de France, and becoming Perpetual Secretary of the Institute, he soon stood high in the Emperor's favor, and was commissioned by him in 1808 to superintend the institution of academies in the countries newly acquired by France. Later, he became a member of the Council of State.

After the fall of Napoleon, he was made Chancellor of the University of Paris, became a Cabinet Minister under Louis XVIII., opposed, under Charles X., the government measures for restricting the freedom of the press, was made a peer of France under Louis Philippe, and died shortly after being named Minister of the Interior.

His scientific work consists chiefly in creating the modern method of classification in zoölogy, and in raising comparative anatomy to the dignity of a science. His chief writings were his *Leçons d'Anatomie Comparée*, *Mémoire pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Anatomie des Mollusques*, *Recherches sur les Ossements Fossiles des Quadrupèdes*, *Discours sur les Révolutions de la Surface du Globe et sur les Changements qu'elles ont produits dans le Règne Animal*, and a number of eulogies delivered by him on scientific men. Both his valuable works on natural history and his eulogies on men of science are distinguished by the precision, clearness, ease, and elegance of their style.

But his genius was not confined to that branch, which he may almost be said to have created. His retentive memory, profound legislative knowledge, and judicial cast of mind enabled, him when President of the Council of State, to sum up the deliberations of his colleagues with a rapidity and succinctness which often amazed them; and his own contributions to legislation were exceedingly valuable.



"Once," says De Véricour, "in the Chamber of Peers, when a military question was mooted, and confusion ensued in the debate, Cuvier rose and solved the difficulty with the ease of a man who had passed his life in the study of tactics."

Nor was he famous only as a student of nature and a masterly writer on his special subjects. "Nothing," says De Véricour, "could surpass the elaborate eloquence of his lectures. Whether lecturing at the Jardin des Plantes on comparative anatomy, at the Collège de France on the history of natural philosophy, or at the Athénée Royal on subjects selected for a cultivated audience, accustomed to hear Chénier, Ginguené, Guizot, and others, he was always profound and never tedious. His great understanding seemed for the time to be communicated to his hearers; and he led them, without fatigue, to the comprehension of the most elevated and recondite views."

There were two Champollions. The elder, who lived to edit the manuscripts of his more distinguished brother, is known as Champollion-Figeac.

Jean Jacques Champollion-Figeac (1778-1867) was eminent, like his younger brother, as an archæologist. He was born at Figeac in the department of Lot. Librarian and Professor of Greek Literature at Grenoble, afterwards Conservator of MSS. in the Imperial Library at Paris, and then Librarian under Louis Napoleon of the palace of Fontainebleau, he published successively *Antiquités de Grenoble*, *Annales des Lagides et Égypte, Ancienne*, *Les Tournois du Roi René*, and *Notice sur les Manuscrits Autographes de Champollion le Jeune*. He left a son, who has worked in the same field of research, and published antiquarian and philological works.

The greater Champollion, the famous Egyptologist, Jean François Champollion (1790-1832), was also born at Figeac. Early interested in Egyptian antiquities by Baron Fourier, studying in Paris,

made Professor of History in the Lyceum at Grenoble, publishing in 1811 his *Égypte sous les Pharaons*, publishing in 1821 his essay, *Sur l'Écriture Hiératique des Anciens Égyptiens*, he was still somewhat in the dark as to the true principle to be employed in deciphering the ancient Egyptian inscriptions, until he became aware of the views of that great English Egyptologist, Dr. Thomas Young. Young lacked grace and perspicuity as a writer, but his scientific genius was amazing. Admired by Arago, Gay-Lussac, and Fresnel for his successful effort to establish the undulatory theory of light, he showed the same lightning glance of intuitive perception when he turned his attention to the great work of deciphering the Rosetta Stone, given up in despair even by Silvestre de Sacy, the great orientalist. Young began by ascertaining the original identity of the demotic, enchorial, or *abridged* characters with the sacred. He also divined the fact that phonetic characters were often interspersed with the symbolic. To these discoveries he added the important one, that the characters enclosed in an oval ring were proper names. The Greek text, which had been easily read and the mutilated parts supplied by Porson and Heyne, helped at this point. The phonetic principle was discovered, and a fair beginning of analysis made.

At this stage, Champollion took up Young's methods, and with masterly ingenuity interpreted monument after monument, and constructed a more perfect alphabet than Young's. The works on Egypt, after he had fairly got on the right track of investigation, were his celebrated *Lettre à Monsieur Dacier*, the *Précis du Système Hiéroglyphique*, the *Panthéon Égyptien*, the *Lettres au Duc de Blacas*, and his posthumous *Grammaire Égyptienne*.

Charles X. appointed him in 1828 to accompany a scientific expedition to Egypt, and on his return to Paris he filled the new chair of Egyptian An-

tiquities in the Collège de France, but died soon after beginning his course of lectures.

Antoine Isaac, Baron Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), another great orientalist, was born at Paris. Early in life he began his oriental studies with Hebrew, to which he added in the course of time a knowledge of Syriac, Aramaic, Samaritan, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, besides the European languages, ancient and modern. His first elaborate work was the *Annales de Mirkhond*, a translation from the Persian. He refused the chair offered him in 1795 in the newly-founded École des Langues Orientales, being unwilling to take the oaths required of him. But, in 1803, he became Professor of Persian in the Collège de France. In 1808 he became a member of the Corps Législatif. Other high positions were filled by him after the fall of Napoleon. In 1822 he founded, with Abel Rémusat, the Société Asiatique. He produced a prodigious number of essays, memoirs, and pamphlets, besides his larger works. Of these the chief were his *Grammaire Arabe*; his *Chrestomathie Arabe*; his *Anthologie Grammaticale Arabe*; his *Mémoires sur Diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, translation of Abdollatis's *Egypt*, and editions of various oriental books; his *Mémoires sur l'État actuel des Samaritains*; and his *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*. His son has been an able journalist.

Jean Pierre Abel Rémusat, (1788–1832), the distinguished Chinese scholar, who founded with De Sacy the Société Asiatique, was born at Paris. His first publication was an essay *Sur la Langue et la Littérature Chinoises*. While serving as a surgeon in Napoleon's military hospitals, he produced his, *Uranographie Mongole* and his discourse *Sur la Nature monosyllabique attribuée Communément à la Langue Chinoise*. On the Restoration, he became Professor in the chair of Chinese newly founded in the Collège de France, delivering a brilliant inaugural address, which De Sacy made haste to bring

before the journal-reading public in the form of an analysis prepared for the *Moniteur*.

After publishing numerous and able works on his special studies, Rémusat died at Paris of cholera. His chief works were his *Recherches sur les Langues Tartares*, *Eléments de la Grammaire Chinoise*, *Recherches sur l'Origine et la Formation de l'Écriture Chinoise*, *Étude historique sur la Médecine des Chinois*, *Tableau Complet des Connaissances des Chinois en Histoire Naturelle* (which, however, he did not complete), *Sur la Pierre Lu*, *Notice sur la Chine et ses Habitants*, *Sur l'Extension de l'Empire Chinois en Occident depuis le Premier Siècle avant Jésus-Christ jusqu'à nos Jours*.

François Arago (1786–1853), the famous scientist, was born at Estagel, near Perpignan, in the department of the Eastern Pyrenees. He early made his reputation as an astronomer, and was employed by the government, with other eminent men of science, to measure an arc of the meridian. During his solitary residence in the little island of Ivica, while engaged in extending the arc from Barcelona to the Balearic Isles, war broke out between France and Spain, and he had a series of trying adventures, ending with his capture and slavery in Algiers.

On his return to France, what he had endured in the cause of science won him unusual honors from the Academy of Sciences. In 1812, he began his fascinating lectures on astronomy, which drew listeners of all classes. Four years later, he established, along with Gay-Lussac, the *Annales de Chimie et de Physique*; and the two scientists, ignorant at that time that Dr. Thomas Young had already done it, proved the undulatory theory of light. A year or so later, Arago published his *Recueil d'Observations géodésiques, astronomiques, et physiques*. His next work was in the department of electro-magnetism, in which he discovered the development of magnetism by rotation.

Two visits made to England gave him early rec-

ognition abroad. He also acquired special renown as a writer by the *éloges* which he delivered in his capacity of Perpetual Secretary of the Academy. These biographical sketches have great literary merit. He also took part in the political movements of his time; held office as a republican minister; was an actor in the revolutions of 1830 and 1848; and refused to take the oath of allegiance to Louis Napoleon on the establishment of the Second Empire.

His chief works were the *Astronomie populaire* and the *Notices scientifiques et biographiques*, in which the clear style, the precise and rapid descriptive power, and the tact in putting salient points in a picturesque grouping have contributed to render science at once attractive and intelligible to the ordinary reader.

Louis Joseph Gay-Lussac (1778–1850), the great chemist and physicist, is naturally named in the same breath with Arago. He was born at St. Léonard, in the department of Upper Vienne. He early worked, in concert with Biot and Alexander von Humboldt, on magnetic and chemical problems. In 1808, he announced his discovery of the law of volumes for gases. By Napoleon he was directed to give special attention to chemical investigations; and, with Thénard, he published the results of these inquiries in the *Recherches Physico-chimiques*. His discoveries belong to a history of chemical progress, and need not detain us here. He continued his scientific work uninterruptedly after the Restoration, and in 1839 was made a peer of France.

Augustin Jean Fresnel (1788–1827) was born at Broglie, in the department of Eure. Receiving a thorough education as an engineer, he was employed by the government in that capacity until 1815. He was busy during the Hundred Days in making investigations into the polarization of light. Unaware of what Young had published on the subject

of the transmission of light, he too proved the undulatory theory, refuting the corpuscular theory advanced by Newton. His chief work was the memoir jointly produced by himself and Arago on this subject.

Fourier, whom Arago succeeded in the secretaryship of the Academy of Sciences, was eminent as a mathematician. He must be carefully distinguished from Fourier the Socialist.

Jean-Baptiste Joseph, Baron Fourier (1768-1830), was born at Auxerre. After completing his education in military schools, he accompanied Napoleon to Egypt, and wrote the fine historical introduction to the *Description de l'Égypte*. As préfet of the department of Isère, he drained the marshes in Bourgoin, near Lyon, which had long been an engineering problem. After the Restoration, he devoted himself wholly to scientific research, producing the *Théorie Analytique de la Chaleur*, the *Mémoire sur les Températures du Globe Terrestre et des Espaces Planétaires*, and a work published after his death, entitled *Analyse des Equations Déterminées*.

Guillaume, Baron Dupuytren (1777-1835), famous as surgeon and anatomist, was born at Pierre-Buffière, in Limousin. He was not only a skillful practitioner, but also the inventor of methods of surgical operation and of valuable instruments. He wrote little, however, his chief works being his *Leçons orales de Clinique Chirurgicale faites à l'Hôtel-Dieu*, and his *Triaté Théorique et Pratique des Blessures par Armes de Guerre*.

To these must be added the elder Ampère.

André Marie Ampère (1775-1836), born at Lyon, was a scientist of great merit. His electro-dynamic theory and his early suggestion of the identity of electricity with magnetism have set him high in the roll of savants. His father perished under the guillotine in 1793. Young Ampère devoted himself then wholly to the study of nature. His first work was an essay *Sur la Théorie Mathématique du*

*Jeu*, a calculation of the chances in gaming. The results of his studies in electricity appeared in his *Recueil d'Observations Electro-dynamiques*, and his *Théorie des Phénomènes Electro-dynamiques*. An account of his son, so famous as a philologist, must be reserved for another part of this sketch.

The Michaux, father and son, may well close this list of scientists.

André Michaux (1746–1802) studied under the botanist Jussieu and the astronomer Lemonnier. He traveled for botanical purposes in England, in the region of the Pyrenees, and, later, into Persia. There he was so fortunate as to cure the Shah of a dangerous disease, and hence the two years he spent in Persia were spent to great advantage. Later still, he traveled in North America at the expense of the government; but, on his way back, was shipwrecked, and lost most of his specimens. The Directory did not treat him well, and in 1800 he sailed for Madagascar, still intent on botanical researches. There he died, two years after. His chief works were *Histoire des Chênes de l'Amérique Septentrionale*, a work on the flora of North America.

His son, François André Michaux (1770–1855), visited this country three times on governmental service. His chief work was *Histoire des Arbres forestiers de l'Amérique Septentrionale*. He succeeded in introducing a number of our forest trees into France.

Another botanist, Ambroise Marie François Joseph Beauvois de Palisot (1752–1820), ought also to be named here. He had adventures in Africa and San Domingo. His works were *Flore d'Oware et de Benin*, *Insects recueillies en Afrique et en Amérique*, and *Musculogie, ou Traité sur les Mousses*.

Eminent as a naturalist, especially in ichthyology, was Bernard Germain Etienne de Laville, Count de Lacépède (1756–1825), a friend of Buffon's. He produced works on the natural history

of Reptiles, of Fishes, of the Cetacea, and of Man. An elegant writer, and an accomplished musician, he added to these an æsthetic work, *La Poétique de la Musique*. He also wrote two romances. In his habits simple and domestic, kind and amiable in social intercourse, he was an honor to the great body of scientists which France produced in this age.



## XVII.

### THE SOCIALISTS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES.

IF this was eminently a period of scientific advance, it was also as markedly a period of socialistic speculation, based upon a materialistic philosophy. The metaphysics of Condillac and Helvetius being in vogue, that school of thought which looks to the physiological nature of man as accounting for all his faculties worked out steadily its logical results. The chief exponents of this philosophy were Cabanis and Volney.

Pierre Jean Georges Cabanis (1757–1808) was born at Cosnac, in the department of the Lower Charente. A liberal in politics and a friend of Mirabeau, he took a prominent part in the revolutionary period, but abhorred the extremes to which his party went. His philosophical work, written from the standpoint of his medical studies, was entitled *Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme*. He traces all ideas to sensation, and regards the brain as performing its functions under identically the same laws as those which regulate the process of digestion.

Some years after the death of Cabanis, his friend, Destutt de Tracy, put his system into more detailed metaphysical form, in his *Éléments d'Idéologie*. Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy, Comte de Tracy (1754–1836), was a sharer in the councils of the revolutionary party in 1789, served the Empire as Senator, and opposed re-actionary measures after the Restoration. Besides his metaphysical work and several writings on political economy, he produced able *Commentaires sur 'L'Esprit des Lois' de Montesquieu*, in 1828.

The most pronounced of the materialists, in carrying the metaphysical doctrine to its legitimate results in the field of religious thought, was Volney, the ardent traveler and student of Eastern tongues.

Constantin François Chassebœuf, Comte de Volney (1757-1820), was born at Craon, in Anjou. He assumed the name of Volney, in addition to the family name of Chassebœuf, after reaching manhood, just as Arouet had assumed that of Voltaire. After attaining a thorough education and studying successively both law and medicine, he went traveling in Egypt and Syria, having inherited a sufficient fortune from his mother. The work of Travels which he published on his return gained him great reputation. He took an active part in the great Revolution, was imprisoned in 1793, and only set free by the fall of Robespierre. Soon after, he published his famous work, *Les Ruines*, in which he set forth his political and religious creed, the latter being a disbelief in all religions. His contribution to the materialistic philosophy was his *Catéchisme*, which teaches that morality is a purely physical science, to be mastered by the same methods as the other natural sciences. He was made professor in the École Normale, and his brilliant discourses were eagerly listened to; but that school was soon suppressed, and he came over to this country, returning to France, however, after a few years' absence. Napoleon had once regarded him with favor; but, as he opposed the Empire, he was always during its existence sneered at by the Emperor as one of the "ideologists," who, whatever their abilities, were impracticable. He was forced to keep his seat in the Senate, but his work was mainly literary, most of his writings, indeed, being purely linguistic. After the Restoration, he was called to the House of Peers, having already been made Count by Napoleon.

A direct outcome of these ideas in philosophy was that school of socialistic thought which ex-

pounded its views in the doctrines of Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier.

Claude Henri, Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), was born at Paris of a family that boasted descent from Charlemagne through the Counts of Vermandois. He was cursed from early youth with the same inordinate pride which characterized his singular kinsman of an earlier generation, the Duc de Saint-Simon. His disciples declare that before he was seventeen, he was used to have his valet wake him up every morning with the words: "Arise, my Lord Count, you have great things to do." He received a fair education, D'Alembert being one of his teachers. He served when quite young among the French volunteers under Washington, reaching the rank of colonel, and distinguishing himself at the siege of Yorktown. Made a prisoner while on his way home, he was taken to Jamaica, where he remained until the declaration of peace. Two years later, he resigned from the army, traveled in Holland and Spain, took a warm interest in various industrial schemes, came back to France on the outbreak of the Revolution and voted for the abolition of titles of nobility, but in the main took no share in the tumults of the period.

He bought up confiscated property, began to conceive his project of establishing a new social system, undertook the study of the sciences by listening to the talk of learned professors, married, and lavished in profuse hospitalities the fortune he had made by speculation. It was at this time that he is said to have visited Madame de Staël at Coppet and proposed marriage to her, having first divorced his wife, addressing the Baroness in these strange words: "Madame, you are the most extraordinary woman in the world, as I am the most extraordinary man in it; we should without doubt have a child more extraordinary still." But the lady treated it as a jest.

Finding himself by this time in want of means,

he published at Geneva a *Lettre d'un Habitant de Genève à ses Contemporains*, proposing the founding of a subscription list for the benefit of men of genius. As this brought in no funds and he began to suffer great privations, his career would have soon been cut short by starvation, had not Diard, an old friend, taken pity on him and given him shelter in his house. Here he produced his *Introduction aux Travaux Scientifiques du Dix-nouvième Siècle*. Diard's death plunged him again into misery, and his sufferings forced him to write to Cuvier and others: "I am dying of hunger. For a fortnight my only fare has been bread and water. I work without fire, and I have had to part with even my clothes to get means to continue my work."

It is not easy to get at the cause of his failure to take advantage of the great name he bore, when the Restoration had brought back the prestige of the old nobility. His disciples claim that he scorned such vulgar ambition. Others suppose that he had offended too deeply to win forgiveness.

In 1819, he put forth a pamphlet called *Parabole*, reflecting bitterly on the aristocracy. For this he was indicted and narrowly escaped severe punishment. But he had already won admirers and followers. Augustin Thierry assisted him in preparing his *Réorganisation de la Société Européenne*. His disciples also helped him in his *L'Industrie ou Discussions Politiques, Morales, et Philosophiques*, the third volume being by Comte. To these succeeded *Le Système Industriel* and *Le Catéchisme Industriel*. His publications having exhausted his finances, he tried to commit suicide by firing a pistol at his head. He lost an eye, but recovered life and reason. He now wrote his most remarkable book, *Le Nouveau Christianisme*. In this work, he claims that all his ideas on progressive social development are based on the words of Jesus Christ, that Christianity has been cramped and distorted by rigid dogmas and ecclesiastical organ-

izations, that Protestantism and Catholicism alike have gone astray from the purpose of the Founder, that the great duty of humanity is to ameliorate the condition of that vast majority—the poor.

After finishing this work, Saint-Simon sank into a languor, and died. Rodrigues, Comte, and others of his disciples were around him in his last moments, and reported his dying utterances with the same spirit of reverence with which Plato and Xenophon recorded those of Socrates. Soon after his death, the periodical he had hoped to establish, *Le Producteur*, appeared. Olinde Rodrigues was editor; the contributors were Bazard, Enfantin, Cerclet, Buchez, Michel Cavalier, Carnot, Fournel, Barroult, Chasles, Duveyrier, Armand Carrel, Reynaud, Pierre Leroux, Saint-Chéron, Guérault, and Charton. It died soon, however, for want of funds.

Some of the leading Saint-Simonians then began to put forth the new doctrines in lectures. They proposed the adoption of a system of rewards as a reform in jurisprudence, the abolition of the death-penalty and the substitution of reformatory discipline, the adoption of civil-service reform, the enfranchisement of women, the abolition of marriage, and the eventual division of property according to the share of each man or woman in promoting social welfare.

All agitation, though its aim be destruction of existing organizations, tends to produce organization of its own. The Saint-Simonians soon organized a hierarchy, claiming that they were restoring the true religion and that Saint-Simon was a veritable prophet. They even adopted a peculiar costume.

When the Revolution of 1830 came, Bazard and Enfantin, the chiefs of the new Church, had all Paris placarded with a scheme for the salvation and regeneration of France. Members of the government, however, denounced their sect as advocates

for community of property and community of women. Proselytes to the new doctrine meantime became numerous. The prospects of the society seemed brighter than ever, when discord came, at the first blush of prosperity, to blight all the fair promise. Bazard died broken-hearted. Enfantin estranged many of the best men in the society. The funds were squandered in the great "Festival of Sanctification." Government prosecuted the chiefs, and troops were sent to break up their meetings and shut up their churches and schools. Enfantin retired to his house at Menilmontant with forty disciples, put forth from that retreat his *Catéchisme et Genèse du Saint-Simonisme*, admitted the public to witness the worship of the sect, and drew down once more the interference of the police. After a short imprisonment, he went to Egypt with some few followers. Returning in the course of two years, he settled in the neighborhood of Lyon. Appointed in his later years a member of the Scientific Commission for Algiers, he wrote on his return from Africa a sensible book, called *Colonisation de l'Algérie*. He also appeared before the public after the Revolution of 1848, editing a paper in which he again brought forward Saint-Simonian doctrines.

Barthélemy Prosper Enfantin (1796-1864) had fought, when a mere boy, against the allies on the heights of Montmartre and St. Chaumont, and had on this account been expelled from the *École Polytechnique*. His chief works were *Doctrine de Saint-Simon* (written with others), *Traité de l'Economie Politique*, *La Religion Saint-Simonienne*, *Moral*, *Le Livre Nouveau*, *Correspondance Philosophique et Religieuse*, *Correspondance Politique*, and *La Vie Eternelle, Passée, Présente, Future*.

Charles Fourier was before the public in advance of Saint-Simon. But it was not until the Saint-Simonians had attracted the attention of the public, that Fourier's speculations excited remark.

François Marie Charles Fourier (1772–1837) was born at Besançon. His father, who was a merchant, gave him a good education. He then lived, as merchant's clerk, at Lyon, Rouen, Marseille, and Bordeaux. He also traveled on commercial business in Holland and Germany. Being a close observer and having a remarkable memory, he acquired a vast amount of useful knowledge during these journeys. The fine fortune left him by his father was lost in the Revolution. He was forced into two year's service in the cavalry, which bad health released him from, at the end of that time. Going into business again, he employed his leisure in studying social problems.

His books, developing his system, were *Théorie des Quatre Mouvements et des Destinées Générales*, *Traité d'Association Domestique Agricole*, *Le Nouveau Monde Industriel et Sociétaire*, *Pièges et Charlatanisme des Deux Sectes Saint-Simon et Owen*, *promettant l'association et progrès*, and *La Fausse Industrie, Morcelée Répugnante, Mensongère, et l'Antidote, l'Industrie Naturelle, Combinée, Attrayante, Véridique, donnant Quadruple Produit*.

Fourier based his system upon a wild theory of the constitution of the universe, which need not be stated here, as he himself bitterly complained that these speculative notions were selected for ridicule, while his main scheme was ignored by the critics. This, stated in his own words, was a practical system embodying "the art of organizing a well-combined industry, from which will result morality, harmony amongst the three classes—the rich, the poor, and the middle class—the impossibility of revolutions, universal unity, and perfectibility." He proposed an equal division of men, the smallest subdivision being a group, comprising from twelve to sixteen families: from twenty-four to thirty-two of these groups were to constitute a phalanx. Each phalanx, comprising about 1800 people, was to live in a building called a Phalanstery, in the middle of

a large and highly cultivated domain, supplied with workshops, studios, and all the appliances requisite for industry, art, comfort, and amusement. His calculation was that such a Phalanstery would not require greater expense than four hundred cottages in an ordinary French parish of the same number of inhabitants, and that a well-built Phalanstery would outlast such cottages six or seven times. The institution was to be a grand co-operative concern, thus minimizing expenses. Distribution was to be regulated according to the capital brought into the common stock and to the labor performed. So many Phalansteries were to form a city, and these again one great metropolis; the Bosphorus being in his view the most convenient site for this metropolis. There were also to be special corporations, called Industrial Armies, commanded by those excelling in each branch of industry, art, or science, and destined to march to each point where their services might be immediately required, whether to build, to dig canals, to drain lands, or for any other great work needing concentrated action. The chief of the whole federal body was to be styled "Omniarch." Fourier's idea, it will be seen, is that of comprehending all humanity in one great industrial association, the members of which are all to hold shares in the common stock—a monster co-operative society, in short.

Fourier's views were taken up after his death, and attained more importance eventually than any other socialist system. *La Phalange*, a periodical edited by Victor Considérant, author of *La Destinée Sociale*, became the exponent of Fourierism. With the financial aid of a young Englishman, named Young, Considérant established in 1832 a Phalanstery on the model planned by his master; but the experiment failed. Later in life, he established a similar community in Texas; but this also proved abortive.

Both the Saint-Simonians and the Fourierites



have passed away. But the great question of the organization of labor remains as difficult to settle as ever. The worst forms of discontent with the relations subsisting between capital and labor have been the crude and brutal Communism and Nihilism of recent times. These, however, can hardly be said to have a literature.

Having now treated of those philosophical and socialist elements which sprung up in the soil of the French Revolution and produced literary fruit either during the Empire or soon after, I find it fitting to proceed to the stage as it was under Napoleon.

As has been said, the Emperor favored the stage, at least so far as the ancient tragedy was concerned. Plays on the classic model and on classic subjects were the order of the day; and they had the great advantage of being acted by that great tragedian, Talma, ably assisted by Mademoiselle Duchesnois. The play-writers of this period were Andrieux, Raynouard, Legouv  , Arnault,   tienne, Desaugiers, and Lemercier.

Fran  ois Guillaume Jean Stanislas Andrieux (1759-1833) was born at Strasbourg. After being a short time in public life, he was removed by Napoleon from the presidency of the Tribunal, and then devoted himself to literature. His chief productions were the comedies, *Les   tourdis*, *Anaximandre*, *Moli  re avec ses Amis*, *Le Vieux Fat*, the tragedy of *Brutus*, and some pretty tales in verse, of which *Le Meunier de Sans-Souci* is the best. As Professor of Literature in the Coll  ge de France, he charmed his classes by his easy, familiar style of lecturing. Some of his lectures were published under the title of *La Philosophie des Belles Lettres*. As Perpetual Secretary of the Academy, he was an active worker in the preparation of its famous Dictionary.

Fran  ois Juste Marie Raynouard (1761-1836), born at Brignoles in Provence, attained greater

fame as a philologist than as a dramatic writer. After practising law with great success; escaping during the Revolutionary troubles the fate of his friends, the Girondists, by being forgotten in prison; and, on the fall of Robespierre and his own release from confinement, resuming the practice of his profession, he finally retired from it with a competency secured, and, betaking himself to Paris, gave himself up to literary work. Besides a poem called *Socrate au Temple d'Aglaure*, he produced a number of plays. These were *Eléonore de Bavière*, *Les Templiers*, *Scipio*, *Les États de Blois*, *Don Carlos*, *Charles I.*, *Debora*, and *Jeanne d'Arc à Orléans*. Of these, *Les Templiers* was the most successful.

Before the Restoration, he had begun to take an absorbing interest in the Provençal language and the old literature of his native country; and to the study of these he devoted himself through the rest of his life. His researches have proved very valuable to linguists, however subsequent investigation has been forced to modify and even wholly set aside some of his theories. His chief linguistic works were *Eléments de la Grammaire Romane*, *Choix de Poésies Originales des Troubadours*, *Grammaire comparée des Langues de l'Europe Latine dans leur Rapports avec la Langue des Troubadours*, *Observations Philologiques sur le Roman du Rou*, *Influence de la Langue Romane*, *Lexique Roman ou Dictionnaire de la Langue des Troubadours*.

Of Marie Joseph de Chénier I have already given an account, in connection with the sketch of his brother André, who perished in the Revolution. Here, it need only be mentioned that he takes rank among the most distinguished of the play-writers of the period.

Gabriel Marie Jean Baptiste Legouvé (1764–1812), born at Paris, devoted himself wholly to literary pursuits. Among his poems, *La Sépulture*, *Les Souvenirs*, *La Mélancolie*, and *La Mérite des Femmes*, the last is a graceful tribute to the ex-

cellences of the sweeter part of humanity. His successful tragedies were *La Mort d'Abel*, *Epicharis et Néron*, and *La Mort de Henri IV.*

Antoine Vincent Arnault (1766–1834) produced a great number of tragedies, the best known of which are *Marius à Minturnes*, *Les Vénitiens*, and *Germanicus*. His residence in Venice on diplomatic business helped him to make his “Venetians” effective. Napoleon was greatly pleased with this play, and his favor was prejudicial to Arnault when the Bourbons came back. Arnault also wrote in prose *Vie Politique et Militaire de Napoléon*, and *Les Mémoires d'un Sexagénaire*. He was one of the contributors to the *Nouvelle Biographie des Contemporains*. His *Fables* have some merit from their vivacity and mischievous wit.

Charles Guillaume Étienne (1770–1845), born in the village of Chamouilly, came young to Paris, and plunged at once into literary efforts. A lively comedy, *Brueys et Palaprat*, brought him immediate reputation. He was censor of the press under Napoleon, but, losing his post at the Restoration, became an opposition journalist. After the Revolution of 1830, he was made a peer of France. Of his many dramatic works, the finest are *Les Deux Gendres*, one of the best comedies of the Empire, and *Joconde*, a work that was produced for the Opéra Comique.

Marc-Antoine Desaugiers (1772–1827) was a joint-producer, with many writers for the stage, of comedies, operas, and vaudevilles; but he is best known by his songs. They have a gaiety so fresh and companionable, so much dash, and so hearty a swing, that they have always been popular. His being like Tom Moore, in singing as well as writing his songs, gave the same kind of personal charm to his society. He warmly befriended Béranger, his country's greatest song-writer, in the beginning of the latter's career.

Népomucène Lemer cier (1772–1840) was born

at Paris. His chief plays were the tragedies of *Agamemnon* and *Frédégonde et Brunehaut*, the dramas of *Richelieu* and *Pinto, ou la Journée des Dupes*, and some comedies which had but slight success. A very remarkable work of his was his satirical poem called *La Panhypocrisiade*. He also put forth a *Cours de Littérature Dramatique*, which gives evidence of fine powers of observation, as well as of a delicacy of taste far from being so perceptible in his dramatic works.

I have mentioned, above, his dramas separately from his tragedies; and this is a fitting place to explain what the French mean by the *Drame* as distinguished from the *Tragédie*. The whole difference may perhaps be best summed up in the statement that the *Tragédie* is the play of the classical taste and is subject to the rules of classic art; while the *Drame* is the play of the romantic school, disregarding the unities and combining at will the elements of comedy with those of tragedy.

The other literary men of this period, not hitherto mentioned, were the historians Daru, Michaud, and Sismondi; the poets, Fontanes, Viennet, and Millevoye; and some of the members of the Bonaparte family, including Napoleon himself.

Pierre Antoine Noel Bruno, Comte Daru (1767-1829) was born at Montpellier. He entered the army while still a mere boy. He was one of the many prisoners of the Reign of Terror whom the fall of Robespierre released. During his imprisonment he employed himself in translating Horace, subsequently publishing this *Traduction en Vers des Poésies d'Horace*. At the same time appeared his *Cleopédie, ou la Théorie des Réputations en Littérature*. Napoleon held him in high favor, and employed him as one of his most trusted ministers. After the Restoration, he devoted himself wholly to literary work. His chief productions were the *Histoire de la République de Venise*, the *Histoire de Bretagne*, his poetical *Discours sur les Facultés*

*de l'Homme*, his *Discours sur la Liberté de la Presse*, his *Éloges*, and a criticism of Chateaubriand's "Genius of Christianity."

Count Daru's great work was his *History of Venice*, in seven volumes. He had peculiar facilities for making this a thorough work. The removal of the republic's archives by the French revolutionary government to Paris, and Daru's position as Napoleon's favored minister, enabled him to make use of abundant materials which had hitherto been carefully kept concealed from the world. De Véricour gives this history very high praise for accuracy and judgment, though he remarks that the style lacks animation.

Joseph Michaud (1767-1839) was born in Savoy, and wrote in early life a *Voyage au Mont Blanc*. Finding his way to Paris through the influence of the Comtesse de Beauharnais, he there became an associate of the revolutionary leaders; but, remaining at heart a conservative, he ventured after the fall of Robespierre to advocate in *La Quotidienne* the restoration of the monarchy. Condemned first to death and then to exile instead, he set out to find a refuge in the Jura mountains. Returning to Paris in 1799, he published some years later his *Printemps d'un Proscrit*, a poem which has some fine passages. In partnership with a younger brother, who was a printer, he undertook next the *Biographie Moderne*, which comprised sketches of the revolutionary leaders. On the return of the Bourbons, he sided heartily with the government party, published *Le dernier Règne de Bonaparte*, resumed the editorship of *La Quotidienne*, and began to write his great work, *L'Histoire des Croisades*.

His friend, Madame Cottin, who was then writing her novel of the Crusading days, *Malek Adhel*, having begged him to look up some authorities for her, he became interested in the subject, and his study of the period ended in his seriously setting to work

at a history of it. De Véricour gives him credit for a graceful, fluent, and figurative style, but charges him with great lack of perspicuity and accuracy.

Michaud's other works were his *Correspondance d'Orient*, his *Histoire de l'Empire de Mysore*, a *Collection de Mémoires sur l'Histoire de France*, and the *Bibliothèque des Croisades*.

Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de Sismondi (1773-1842) was born, of a house sprung from Italian ancestry, at Geneva, in Switzerland. His education was still in progress when the necessities of his parents forced him to enter a counting-house at Lyon. He did his work fairly, and in after-life regarded this practical training as of great value to him. The Revolution came, and he had to return to Geneva. But the family soon ceased to feel safe there, and took refuge in England, soon however to return. Still feeling uneasy, they bought a little farm near Pescia, in Tuscany. Here Sismondi began to prepare materials for his *History of the Italian Republics*. Meanwhile, he had seen something of the society which gathered around Madame de Staël, and had been classed by Napoleon as one of those "ideologists" whom he so constantly sneered at.

Before his history was finished, he put forth a work on political economy entitled *De la Richesse commerciale*. His *Histoire des Républiques italiennes*, in sixteen volumes, when it did appear, established his reputation. This was confirmed by his *Histoire de la Littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, and his greatest work, the *Histoire des Français*. De Véricour eulogizes his learning, research, and penetration; the purity of his style; and the picturesqueness with which he has succeeded in investing the scenes of his first subject, the Italian city-commonwealths. But he charges him with inequality of style and with the obtrusion upon the narrative of philosophical reflections which break

the spell of illusion for the reader and chill his interest. Guizot also, in his *History of Civilization*, while criticising Sismondi's *History of the French* closely, gives it very high praise.

We turn now to the poets. Louis, Marquis de Fontanes (1757-1821), sprung from an old Huguenot family of Languedoc, was born at Niort. He early won at Paris a reputation for elegant and graceful poetry, publishing there, before the Revolution, *Le Cri de Mon Cœur*, *Le Verger*, and translations from English poetry. He took the popular side when the great crash came, became famous as an orator, warmly admired Napoleon, and kept his favor to the last. After the Restoration, he was raised to the peerage by Louis XVIII.

Jean Louis Guillaume Viennet was born at Béziers in 1777. Intended for a priest, he became a soldier on the outbreak of the Revolution, and after the Restoration betook himself to literature. He was successful as journalist, satirist, dramatist, and romancer. Among his works may be named *La Philippide*, his *Promenade philosophique au Cimetière du Père La Chaise*, his *Satires*, his *Epîtres*, his play of *Michel Brémond*, and his *Fables*.

Charles Hubert Millevoye (1780-1816) attempted every branch of poetry, but did not succeed in works of the highest order. In little poems of pure sentiment he proved himself a poetic artist of exquisite charm and grace. *La Chute des Feuilles* is considered his finest poem. Among the others, in which his chaste and melancholy sweetness show to best advantage, are *L'Amour maternel*, *L'Anniversaire*, *La Demeure abandonnée*, *Le Poète mourant*, and *Les Souvenirs*. His dramatic attempts and his more ambitious poems, the *Charlemagne* and the *Alfred*, will not be remembered.

The Emperor himself has some claim to a place in the literature of his age. Napoléon Bonaparte (1769-1821), born at Ajaccio in the island of

Corsica shortly after it fell under French rule, received a French education and used the language always with power, if not with accuracy. The great events of his life belong to history, and need not be recounted here. His literary works consist of those brilliantly eloquent proclamations to his soldiers and bulletins of his campaigns, which are certainly the productions of a very high order of oratorical genius; his messages and addresses to various state bodies; his correspondence private and public; and his *Mémoires historiques*, written under his dictation at St. Helena. In these campaign memoirs, his style is simple, precise, and direct.

His brother, Lucien Bonaparte, Prince of Canino (1775-1840), was also born at Ajaccio and educated in France. He was President of the Council of Five Hundred, when that 18th Brumaire dawned which was to see his military brother all powerful over the destinies of France; and it was to Lucien's help on that occasion that Napoleon owed his success. For a time he continued docile to the will of the more imperious Bonaparte; but, opening his eyes at last to Napoleon's arbitrary character and boundless ambition, he began to oppose him. Matters were brought to a crisis by Lucien's refusal to divorce his second wife, Madame Joubert-thon, the widow of a stockbroker, even for the bribe of the crowns of Italy and Spain. Retiring to his estate of Canino, in the province of Viterbo, Lucien devoted himself to art, science, and literature. It was by the Pope that he was created Prince of Canino and Musignano, and Rome was his favorite resort. Pursued by Napoleon's hostility, he at last set sail for America, but was captured by the English and taken to England. On Napoleon's retirement to Elba, Lucien was allowed to return to Rome, where he had been living at the time of his attempt to get to America. His abilities might have given him a fair place in



literature, had he not made the mistake of trying to produce epic poems. His *Charlemagne ou l'Église délivrée*, in twenty-four cantos, which was written and published in London; and his *La Cynnéide ou La Corse Sauvée*, were both tedious efforts. The pretended memoirs of Lucien are not considered authentic by modern critics.

Lucien's eldest son, Charles Lucien Jules Laurent Bonaparte (1803–1857), born at Paris, won some fame as a naturalist, and especially as an ornithologist. He wrote one or two works on natural history. Another son, Louis Lucien Bonaparte, attained some eminence as a chemist, mineralogist, and linguist.

Louis Bonaparte (1778–1846), Napoleon's third brother, whom he made King of Holland, and forced to marry his adopted daughter, Hortense Eugénie Beauharnais, lived in retirement after the fall of the Emperor, and formally separated from his wife. This brother of one emperor and father of another wrote a novel, descriptive of Dutch manners and customs, *Marie, ou les Hollandaises*; *Documents sur le Gouvernement de la Hollande*; *Histoire du Parlement Anglais*; and a criticism of Norvins' *Napoleon*.

Hortense Eugénie Beauharnais (1783–1837), the daughter of Josephine by her first husband, General Beauharnais, was born at Paris. Her father was one of the early victims of the Revolution. Her mother was protected by Barras, and after her marriage with Napoleon, soon rose to the highest position in the State. Hortense preferred General Desaix, but the will of Napoleon forced her to marry Louis and become Queen of Holland. After suffering great anxieties about her two sons during the risings of the Carbonari in Italy, where one of the young men died, she settled permanently in the residence at Arenenberg, in the canton Thurgau, which had been her habitual resort since the overthrow of Napoleon. She was a good song-writer.

Her best known song is that *Partant pour la Syrie*, which her son afterwards made the national air of France. She also wrote *La Reine Hortense en Italie, en France, et en Angleterre, pendant l'Année 1831*.

In connection with the Bonapartes, may be mentioned Madame de Rémusat, whose *Memoirs*, published by her grandson in 1879, give so intimate a view of the Napoleonic court.

Claire Elisabeth Jeanne Gravion de Vergennes, Comtesse de Rémusat (1780–1821) was a grand-niece of Louis XVI.'s minister, Vergennes. Her career is fresh in the minds of the readers of the *Memoirs* and *Letters* lately before the public. She also wrote an essay *Sur l'Éducation des Femmes*.

The sprightly but superficial *Memoirs* of the Duchesse d'Abrantes, and the *Memoirs* of Las Cases should also find a place here. The title of the well-known work by Marshal Junot's wife is *Mémoires ou Souvenirs historiques sur Napoléon, la Révolution, le Directoire, le Consulat l'Empire, et la Restauration*, and is certainly full of promise, but there is really little in the book of historic value.

Emmanuel Auguste Dieudonné, Comte de Las Cases (1766–1842), was born in the château of Las Cases, near Revel. He was in the naval service when the Revolution broke out, served later in the Prince of Condé's army, was an exile in England, supporting himself by teaching, and came back to France on Napoleon's settling a firm government. Getting the Emperor's attention by his fine *Atlas historique*, he was employed by him. After Waterloo, on the dethroned Emperor's sentence of imprisonment, Las Cases offered to share his fate. During his stay at St. Helena, he acted as amanuensis for Napoleon; but he was removed some time before the Emperor's death. After that event, he published the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*. He was in public life for a time after the Revolution of 1830.

To these may be added the Memoirs of the Comte Miot de Melito, diplomatist under the Empire, and an acute and cool observer of persons and events; as well as the Letters, recently published by Pallain, of that singular being, the Machiavelli of modern times, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord, Prince de Benevento, so often master of the destinies of France, subtlest of diplomatists, and keenest of wits.

Some mention may be made here also of Memoirs of a very different kind—those of Vidocq, the detective. François-Jules Vidocq (1775–1850), born at Arras, successively thief, swindler, soldier, galley-slave, highwayman, informer, spy, chief of police, and autobiographer, put forth his book when Sue's novel was most in vogue, with the title, *Les Vrais Mystères de Paris*. In these Memoirs of Vidocq occurs a song in the flash dialect, which Maginn translated into the corresponding English thieves' dialect. Both versions may be found in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ."

## XVIII.

## AFTER THE RESTORATION.

THE philosophers and the socialist dreamers of whom I have already spoken were an outcome of the French Revolution. But there was at the same time an under-current of thought and feeling, which began shortly after the Restoration to take definite form as a powerful re-action against the tendencies and forces which at once produced and followed the Revolution. Especially was there a re-action against infidelity, helped into its earlier literary expression by the somewhat vague religious sentiment of Chateaubriand and the Protestant convictions of Madame de Staël, and carried to ultramontane extremes by Joseph De Maistre. Similar views to those of De Maistre, but expressed more temperately and with more emphasis given to the political side of the question, were at about the same time strongly brought forward by De Bonald.

Louis Gabriel Ambroise, Vicomte de Bonald (1753-1840), was born at Monna, near Milhau, in Aveyron. He was one of the emigrants, when the fury of the Revolution burst upon society. His first work of note, *Théorie du Pouvoir Politique et Religieux*, foretold the Restoration. When Napoleon had established a strong government, De Bonald returned to France, and entered the public service. After the Restoration, he was raised to the peerage by Louis XVIII. He refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new government after the Revolution of July. Besides the work mentioned above, he published *Législation Primitive*, and *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Premiers Objets des Connaissances Morales*. His style is con-

fused, and his views, as already stated, were extreme; but he did good service against the materialism of the physiological school.

Another, but a much more gentle advocate of the claims of the church than De Bonald, De Maistre, or De Lamennais, was Pierre Simon Ballanche (1776-1847). According to De Véricour, Ballanche was as full of charity and Christian unction as Fénelon, and might be classed as a Catholic transcendentalist. He styles him "the most poetic philosopher and prose writer of the nineteenth century," and states that "all his works are marked by the most touching sympathy for his fellow-creatures; and the encouragements he gives them glow as if with prophetic fire." His works were *Du Sentiment considéré dans la Littérature et dans les Arts*, a prose poem called *Antigone*, an essay *Sur les Institutions sociales dans leur Rapport avec les Idées nouvelles*, *Le Vieillard et le Jeune Homme*, a novel entitled *L'homme sans Nom*, the *Vision d'Hébal*, and, above all, *Palingénésie Sociale*.

But the greatest, and at one time apparently the most hopeful movement in the bosom of the Catholic Church, because it aimed at reconciling the authority of the Church with the yearning of the age for free government, was the Liberal Catholic movement headed by Montalembert, De Lamennais, and Lacordaire. Montalembert was much the youngest of these; but his position, his genius, and his undying hopefulness of nature identify him with the movement as its especial protagonist.

Charles Forbes, Comte de Montalembert (1810-1870), was of an ancient family of Poitou. A born orator, and an admirer of the English Constitution, of Burke and of Grattan, he was fated to spend his life and his glowing energies in the tormenting task of trying to reconcile his love of liberty with his devotion to the Holy Roman Church, and to contend in vain for a basis of compromise between the church and the state.

His whole career was greatly influenced by those two able men, the Abbé de Lamennais and the Père Lacordaire. These two men planned and published *L'Avenir* as the exponent of their views. Their great object was to place the Church at the head of the liberal movement. They were cordially joined by Montalembert. But it was not long before they contrived to embroil themselves with both the Government and the Church. *L'Avenir* was condemned at Rome. Montalembert and Lacordaire submitted; but De Lamennais broke away in wrath from the Church, published his famous *Paroles d'un Croyant*, wildly and fiercely renouncing a body which he now believed to be at war with liberty.

Montalembert turned to literature for solace, published his *Du Vandalisme en France*, a plea for the old cathedrals; and his *Histoire de S. Elisabeth*, a devout and enthusiastic study of holy life in the "Ages of Faith." On reaching the age which permitted his joining in the debates of the Chamber as a peer of France, he began that wonderful oratorical career in which his genius showed itself at its best. Sainte-Beuve thus describes him:

"When he re-appeared in the Chamber, [his first appearance had been when he stood his trial before his peers for opening a school in defiance of the law, along with Lacordaire and De Caux.] he had the right to say anything, to dare anything, so long as he retained that elegance of aspect and diction which never forsook him. He could utter with all freedom the most passionate pleadings for that liberty which was the only excess of his youth. He could develop without interruption those absolute theories which from another mouth would have made the Chamber shiver, but which pleased them from his. He could even give free course to his mordant and incisive wit, and make personal attacks with impunity upon potentates and ministers. In one or two cases the Chancellor called him to order for form's sake; but the favor which attends ability carried everything before it. His bitterness—and he was sometimes bitter—from him seemed almost

amenity, the harshness of the meaning being disguised by the elegance of his manner and his perfect grace."

In 1837, Montalembert married the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Count Félix de Mérode, a nobleman of an ancient Belgian house, and with her he lived a happy and contented home life, at the same time enjoying as an orator many public triumphs. He resolutely opposed to the last the arbitrary measures of the Second Empire, and the efforts of that party in the Church which aimed at establishing the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, though on his deathbed, soon after the success of that party, he gave in his adhesion to what he said he did not pretend to understand. Besides his works already mentioned, he published, among other writings, *Les Moines d'Occident depuis S. Benoît jusqu' à S. Bernard*, *L'Église libre dans l'État libre*, and *Le Pape et La Pologne*.

One of the most touching incidents in Montalembert's life was that related of his daughter's announcing to her parents her desire to become a nun; and, on their tenderly seeking to know what secret sorrow might be prompting the wish, her pointing to a passage in one of her father's works in which he eloquently declared that blighted hearts were a poor sacrifice to offer to God.

Hughes Félicité Robert de Lamennais (1782-1854) was born at Saint Malo. He took the tonsure in 1811, going into the little seminary of Saint Malo, and being ordained priest some years later by the Bishop of Rennes. A tract against Napoleon obliged him to take refuge in England. Other works of his had already given him some reputation as an assailant of the materialistic philosophy of the day; but the appearance in 1817 of the first volume of his *Essai sur l'Indifférence en Matière de Religion* gave him at once European celebrity. The remaining three volumes were equally successful, and, when he went to Rome,

Pope Leo XII. declared him to be "the last Father of the Church." His later course I have already described. After the *Paroles d'un Croyant*, which proclaimed his rupture with the Church, he put forth a series of works, advocating the most extreme democratic doctrines. He ceased to believe with the Church on many vital points, and tried to construct from his natural lights a system of Christian metaphysics. His most labored production of this period was his *Esquisse d'une Philosophie*.

Jean Baptiste Henri Lacordaire (1802–1861) was born at Recey-sur-Ource, Côte-d'or, the son of a village doctor. Montalembert, in his short biography of *Le Père Lacordaire*, says :

"He had, like all the young people of his day, lost the faith at school, and had not recovered it either at the law school or the bar, in which he was enrolled for two years. To all outward seeming, nothing distinguished him from his contemporaries. He was a deist, as all the youth was then ; he was, above all, liberal, like the whole of France, but without excess. He had said it again and again : no man or book was the instrument of his conversion. A sudden and secret flash of grace opened his eyes to the nothingness of irreligion. In a single day he became Christian, and the very next day from Christian he wished to be priest."

He soon became famous as a great preacher, profoundly in earnest and of a brilliant eloquence. I have already the story of his association with Montalembert and De Lamennais in the publication of *L'Avenir*. From the time of the papal condemnation of that journal, he devoted himself to his pulpit duties. His sermons at Notre Dame drew immense audiences. He produced a *Life of Saint-Dominic*, and, moved by his enthusiasm for that order, became a Dominican friar. This led to his preaching in different parts of France. After the Revolution of 1848, he for a short time went into political life, as one of the representatives from



Marseille. Preaching, at various times, again at Notre-Dame, he finally gathered a number of his sermons of both the earlier and later periods, and published them under the title, *Conférences de Notre Dame de Paris*. His *Oraisons funèbres* are also esteemed by French critics as worthy to be placed beside those of the great preachers of the seventeenth century.

We have now reached the point at which it will be fitting to take up those metaphysical thinkers who have mainly directed the thought of France in the last generation. These are Cousin, Jouffroy, Damiron, and Comte. Cousin was preceded by Royer-Collard, whose busy share in political life has somewhat obscured his claims to notice as a philosopher.

Pierre Paul Royer-Collard (1763–1845) was born at Sompuis, Marne. He was at first prominent in the agitations of the Revolution, but was forced to live in obscurity during the Reign of Terror, even following the plough to escape the sharp-eyed messengers of the Jacobins. When Napoleon came into power, Royer-Collard was placed in the chair of philosophy in the University of France, and devoted himself with great singleness of purpose to the study of metaphysics. He rejected the system of Condillac, studied by preference the Scottish philosophers—Reid and Dugald Stewart—and began that system of eclecticism which Cousin afterwards developed with so much brilliancy. The Restoration broke in upon these studies, as Royer-Collard was soon drawn into political life. After 1842, however, he lived in retirement. He published little; but his influence on both political and philosophical thought was very great. His library-room served as a sort of salon in which were to be met men like Cousin, Guizot, the Duc de Broglie, Casimir Périer, De Barante, Villemain, Ampère, and De Rémusat. His earnest and upright character, his moderate and sensible views, the simplicity of his life, and

his love for books caused him to be highly esteemed by such men as these.

Victor Cousin (1792–1867), the head of the school of Eclectic Philosophy, was born at Paris, the son of a clock-maker. He was at first Greek tutor in the *École Normale*, but before long was appointed assistant to Royer-Collard, and, on the retirement of the latter from his professorship, became his successor. He expounded the doctrines of the Scottish metaphysicians with great clearness and power, added to them with discreet eclecticism principles borrowed from the great German thinkers—Kant, Fichte, Jacobi, and Schelling; and finally drew largely from Hegel also, combining them all into a symmetrical whole, equally brilliant and seductive as seeming to harmonize views at first sight discordant. His audiences were large and enthusiastic. As a lecturer he was always a splendid success. Rare lucidity of exposition, a style recalling that of Plato, extraordinary powers of generalization, admirable taste and skill in illustrating the deepest metaphysical subtleties from history, art, science, and daily life, were qualities which gave a new charm to a study commonly reputed dry and repulsive. He took some part in public life when the Revolution of 1830 made his friend Guizot Prime Minister. His chief works were the *Histoire de la Philosophie au XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*; *Fragments littéraires*; *Fragments philosophiques*; a translation of Plato; literary studies of Pascal, Jacqueline Pascal, and J. J. Rousseau; the *Du Vrai, du Beau, et du Bien*; an *Introduction à l'Histoire de la Philosophie*; *Études sur les Femmes Illustres et la Société du XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*; *Des Principes de la Révolution française*; and *Leçons de Philosophie sur Kant*. His ablest scholars were Jouffroy and Damiron.

Théodore Simon Jouffroy (1796–1842) became a professor in the Collège de France. He published translations of Reid and Stewart. His best known original work is the *Mélanges Philosophiques*.

Jean Philibert Damiron (1794–1862) was also a Professor of Metaphysics, and published several philosophical works, among them a *Cours de Philosophie* and an essay on *Philosophie en France au 19<sup>e</sup> Siècle*. Another of Cousin's pupils was Louis Eugène Marie Bautain (1796–1867), born at Paris. He wrote *La Morale de l'Evangile comparée à la Morale des Philosophes*, *Philosophie-psychologie expérimentale*, *Philosophie morale*, *Philosophie du Christianisme*, *La Religion et la Liberté considérées dans leurs Rapports*, and *La Morale de l'Evangile comparée aux divers Systèmes de Morale*.

Others of this school were Bouillet, De Cardail-  
lac, Mazure, Ozaneaux, Hippeau, Tissot, Garnier,  
Poret, Caro, Paffe, Caunes, and Géruzez.

Among the opponents of eclecticism was Pierre Leroux (1798–1871), once a Saint Simonian. His *Réfutation de l'Eclectisme* was the ablest of the many attacks made on the system of Cousin. Pierre Leroux, after separating from Enfantin, joined Reynaud in editing the *Revue Encyclopédique*, and, on its failure, the *Encyclopédie Nouvelle*. About the time of his attack on eclecticism, he published also his work *De l'Humanité, de son Principe, et de son Avenir*, in which he set forth his own philosophical views, a sort of modified eclecticism with a belief in the old *anima-mundi* theory of the ancients superadded to it. Later, he associated himself with Viardot and Madame Dudevant in the publication of the *Revue Indépendante*. He was also the author of a philosophic poem, of a drama called *Job*, and of a translation of Goethe's *Werther*.

Auguste Comte (1796–1857), the founder of the Positive Philosophy, was another of those who had once been Saint-Simonians. After breaking away from that school, he became Professor of Mathematics in the École Polytechnique. His works were *Cours de Philosophie Positive*; *Discours sur l'Ensemble du Positivisme*; *Système de Politique Positive*; and *Catéchisme Positiviste, ou Sommaire*

*Exposition de la Religion Universelle.* He produced also works on analytical geometry and on astronomy. His main idea was that Theology was the law of man's childhood, Metaphysics the law of his youth, and Positivism the law of his maturity, this Positivism being the search of humanity after the laws that produce phenomena. Positivism, then, limits all legitimate speculation to observed facts. It makes a religion of science, and ignores all that part of nature within and without us which science can not grasp and analyze.

The great question of the organization of labor which the socialists brought into prominence was treated with especial attention by two antagonistic thinkers, Louis Blanc and Michel Chevalier.

Jean Joseph Louis Blanc was born in 1813. In a Socialist Review, which he founded in Paris in 1838, he brought out his chief work on Socialism, the *Organisation du Travail*, afterwards publishing it in a separate form. This book won him great popularity among the industrial classes. He next published his *Histoire de dix Ans*, which overthrew the government. His *Histoire de la Révolution française* followed, in which he prophesied the triumph of Socialism. When the Revolution of 1848 came, Blanc was put at the head of the commission on the labor question. Involved in the insurrections which followed the attempt to inaugurate national workshops, he was forced to escape to London. During his exile, he wrote his *Appel aux Honnêtes Gens* and his *Catéchisme des Socialistes*. These were followed by *Pages d'Histoire de la Révolution de Février*, *Plus de Girondins*, and *La République Une et Indivisible*. On the fall of the Second Empire at Sedan, Blanc returned to France. His *French Revolution* is an able work.

Michel Chevalier was born at Limoges in 1806. He was educated to be an engineer. In his early life, he was an active Saint-Simonian; and, when the division took place in that sect, he followed

Enfantin, helped in preparing the *Livre Nouveau*, and suffered imprisonment for his ardent advocacy of that cause. Later, however, he retracted all that he had advanced against Christianity and the institution of marriage. He was sent by the government to the United States, on a special mission of inquiry into our canal and railroad system. He also visited England with a similar purpose. Publishing works of industrial information based on these travels of investigation, and pursuing a career of earnest devotion to his profession, he gained in time a position of distinction in the state. In reply to Blanc's work, he wrote his *Lettres sur l'Organisation du Travail*. He also published works on political economy and on Mexico.

Among the writers on political philosophy must be classed Charles de Rémusat, De Tocqueville, Guizot, De Cormenin, and the Emperor Louis Napoléon.

François Marie Charles, Comte de Rémusat (1797-1875), the son of a Provençal gentleman, Auguste Laurent, Comte de Rémusat, and of that Madame de Rémusat whose Letters and Memoirs have lately been put before the world, was born at Paris, and began his political career as a journalist under the influence of Guizot; but at a later period he pursued a more independent course. The most important of his earlier essays were *Sur la Responsabilité des Ministères*, *Sur la Liberté de la Presse*, *Sur la Procédure par Jurés en Matière Criminelle*, and *Sur les Amendements à la Loi des Elections*. He figured among those journalists whose protest emphasized the popular discontent with the governmental measures which produced the Revolution of 1830. He went then into public life and held some important offices, continuing to serve the State in such capacities after the Revolution of 1848. When Louis Napoleon overthrew the republic, De Rémusat was exiled for a time. During the Second Empire he devoted himself to

literature and science. His works on non-political subjects were *Essais de Philosophie*, *Histoire d'Abélard*, *Saint Anselme de Canterbury*, *L'Angleterre au dix-huitième Siècle*, *Passé et Présent*, *Bacon*, *Hartley*, *Histoire de la Philosophie anglaise de Bacon à Locke*, and a philosophical drama entitled *Abélard*.

Charles Henri Alexis Cléret de Tocqueville (1805–1859) was born at the château of Verneuil, near Mantes, in the department of Seine-et-Oise. In 1831 he came to the United States with Gustave de Beaumont on a mission from the Government to examine and report on the practical working of the penitentiary system. He used the occasion to study the influence of a democratic form of government on the institutions, social manners, and literature of a country. On returning, besides publishing with his colleague a report *Du Système pénitentiaire aux États-Unis*, he put forth the result of his studies in his great work, *De la Démocratie en Amérique*. Royer-Collard styled this work "a continuation of Montesquieu." A great sensation was produced by it, and De Tocqueville at once took rank as the greatest thinker of his day in the science of political philosophy. The clearness and keenness of his vision in a sphere of observation where the facts are exceedingly complex, the fairness of his judgments, the thoroughness with which he had digested the vast array of facts before him, and the simplicity, force, warmth, and vivacity of his style won him golden opinions from the most judicious critics on both continents. When he visited England, he received an enthusiastic welcome from the Whig leaders. There he married an English lady. Later, though at first defeated, he was in the end sent to the Chamber by the people of that Norman department in which the old family estate of Tocqueville lay. He was one of the strongest opponents of the Socialist movement. When Louis Napoléon destroyed the liberty of the people, De Tocqueville retired to his

Norman estate and devoted himself to agriculture. There he wrote *L'ancien Régime et la Révolution*. He died at Cannes, whither he had gone for his health. In 1860, De Beaumont published his friend's *Œuvres et Correspondance inédites*, with a biographical notice.

Gustave de Beaumont (1802–1866) was born at Beaumont-la-Chartre, in the department of Sarthe. His course was, throughout, that of his friend, De Tocqueville. He was Lafayette's grandson, and he married his cousin, the daughter of Georges Lafayette. Besides the Penitentiary Report which he prepared in conjunction with De Tocqueville, he produced *Marie, ou l'Esclavage aux Etats-Unis*, and *L'Irlande, sociale, politique, et religieuse*.

François Pierre Guillaume Guizot (1787–1874) has won his greatest literary distinction as a historian. But he was also a remarkable orator, statesman, and publicist. He was born at Nîmes, of Protestant parents. His father, a lawyer, perished on the revolutionary scaffold. By his mother he was then taken to Geneva. He betook himself to Paris in 1805, and devoted himself to literary pursuits. His first important publication was a *Dictionnaire des Synonymes français*, after which he put forth the *Vie de Corneille et de Shakspeare*, and a translation of Gibbon, with valuable historical notes. In 1812, he was appointed Professor of History, and began that series of historical works on which his fame chiefly rests. After the Restoration he took part in politics, writing his *Histoire des Origines du Gouvernement Représentatif*, and other works on the philosophy of political institutions.

In conjunction with other men of letters, he published two most valuable collections of Memoirs throwing light on French history, numbering in all fifty-seven volumes. Besides, also, editing several works, he published his *Histoire de la Révolution d'Angleterre*, and his *Histoire de la Civilisation en*

*France.* After the Revolution of 1830, he strenuously supported Casimir Perier, held several high offices in the State, and labored earnestly for improvements in education. After serving as ambassador to England, he became Prime Minister until the fall of Louis Philippe. His restrictive measures, his cold and austere manner, and his rigid impassibility, together with the general offensiveness to the nation of the government which he represented, made Guizot at this time one of the most unpopular men in France.

Escaping to London when the crash came, he was there well received, in spite of his identification with the selfish policy which the "Citizen-King" had pursued both at home and abroad.

His pamphlet entitled *Guizot à ses Amis* failed to restore the confidence of the French people. The violent seizure of the government by Louis Napoléon in December, 1851, put an end to Guizot's intrigues to bring about a restoration of the monarchy; and he returned to his literary labors, writing *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de mon Temps*, *Méditations sur l'État actuel de la Religion chrétienne*, *Mélanges biographique et littéraires*, and *Mélanges politiques et historiques*. Besides these works may also be named his *Monk, ou Chute de la République et Rétablissement de la Monarchie en Angleterre*; *Washington, son Caractère et son Influence dans la Révolution d'Amérique*, *Études sur les Beaux-arts*, and a *History of France* as told to his grandchildren. This last-mentioned work was published after his death.

Politically, Guizot's position was that of a Constitutionalist, equally opposed to absolute monarchies and to republican governments. His horror of disorder led him to prefer authority to liberty, when there was strong danger of liberty's degenerating into anarchy. His style of oratory was incisive and impressive; he kept steadily to his subject, and allowed nothing to draw him away from it.



His speeches were wholly impersonal, in spite of the temptation which must often have assailed him to indulge in recrimination when Berryer, Barrot, Thiers, Arago, and Mauguin rained upon him their fierce philippics.

As a writer, his chief qualities are great erudition, a passion for order and for generalization, elevation of sentiment, loftiness of view, impartiality, and closeness of analysis. His style is defective. It lacks the charm which we look for when reading a great French writer. Nor does Guizot impress the reader as one who knows the human heart. The vast fund of knowledge displayed has all been drawn from books. There is nothing to indicate personal observation as the source of anything he has written, or to point to his possession of that gift of sympathy by which imaginative men of genius are able to re-animate the people of the past and set them vividly before us.

We turn now to an agitator in behalf of popular rights, who left behind him the reputation of having been the greatest of pamphleteers. This was Courier.

Paul Louis Courier (1772-1825) was born at Paris. He served in the Italian campaign, resigned from the army after the battle of Wagram, acquired some literary reputation as a translator from the classics; but directly after the Restoration began his brilliant career as a pamphleteer. Living on a small estate in Touraine, he poured forth one after the other caustic criticisms on the course of the government, the keen and cutting irony of which recalled the masterly style of Pascal. For one political diatribe the government had him prosecuted and condemned to imprisonment. His inimitable wit and the Attic simplicity of his style give his productions high literary value. His last piece, put forth the year before his assassination, with the title *Pamphlet des Pamphlets*, was styled by

Armand Carrel—who published in 1835 a complete edition of his works—The Swan's Death-song.

Béranger, with his pungent sarcasm and biting scorn, was about the same time making his political songs as dreadful to the Ministry as were Courier's pamphlets. But in one respect Courier differed widely from Béranger as a political agitator: he abhorred the Napoleonic legend which with Béranger had become the natural rallying point against the evils of Bourbon rule.

Another of the formidable enemies of the reactionary government was De Cormeuin.

Louis Marie de la Haye, Vicomte de Cormenin (1788–1868), was born at Paris. He had an immense political influence through the whole period which elapsed from the time of the Restoration to the day of his death. His pamphlets were almost as famous as those of Courier. His work, *Le Droit Administratif*, his *Études sur les Orateurs Parlementaires*, and his *Le Droit de Tonnage en Algérie* were all works of merit. *Les Entretiens de Village* was another work of his.

Another historian, who was also orator and statesman, was Thiers.

Louis Adolphe Thiers (1797–1877) was born at Marseille. Studying law at Aix, he formed there a close intimacy with Mignet the historian, and with him sought Paris to begin his career there as political journalist. His *Histoire de la Révolution française* by its clearness of narration, accuracy, and vigor of style, at once gave him reputation. His fatalist theory, by which he justified all the excesses of each party in its hour of triumph, detracts greatly from the philosophic value of this work. When the struggle began which led to the overthrow of the government in 1830, Thiers by working heartily with the Liberals had no small share in bringing about the revolution. He now became one of the leading public men of France, in spite of the ludicrous appearance which he presented

in the Chamber with his diminutive person and huge spectacles. His parliamentary oratory, however, soon won him attention, and he was always a prominent member of the government or of the opposition. When the republic, set up in 1848, was overthrown by Louis Napoléon in 1851, Thiers was banished. He was soon, however, allowed to return. He had been working for many years on his *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*. At last this work was published in 1860. A few years after, he again entered public life, this time as a member of the party in opposition. On the downfall of the Second Empire, he once more came into prominence, was put at the head of the Provisional Government, made peace with Prussia, and became President of the new republic, giving way in 1873 to Marshal MacMahon.

Narcisse Achille, Comte de Salvandy (1796–1856), born at Condom, was another of those engaged in political life who also wrote history. He put forth many political pamphlets; wrote, after a travel into Spain, a romance styled *Alonzo*; and published, in 1829, his *Histoire de Pologne avant et sous le Roi Jean Sobieski*. The style of this history, according to De Véricour, is too often declamatory and pompous.

Among recent historians, one of the most eminent was Pierre Lanfrey (1828–1877). He was born in Savoy. His first work was *L'Église et les Philosophes du 18<sup>e</sup> Siècle*. After this came his *Histoire politique des Papes* and *Le Rétablissement de la Pologne*. But the great work of his life was his *Histoire de Napoléon I.*, published in six volumes. It is a very thorough study of the imperial period, and exposes with unrelenting clearness of narrative and fulness of detail the selfish character of the first Emperor. When the Franco-German war came on, Lanfrey took the field with the *garde mobile*, and fought like a true Frenchman. Later, he was appointed by Thiers ambassador to

Switzerland. On MacMahon's election to the presidency, Lanfrey resigned this post. Some two years before his death, he was elected life-senator.

The Emperor Louis Napoléon must be classed among those writers who have written history from a political motive. With the startling and romantic events of his life we have nothing to do here. His career belongs to history. His literary work may be summed up in a few words.

Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte (1808-1873) was born in the purple, in the palace of the Tuileries. During his wandering life, before the Revolution of 1848 opened the way for him to gain a political foothold in France, he published at various times his *Réveries Politiques*, *Projet de Constitution*, *Deux Mots à M. de Chateaubriand sur la Duchesse de Berri*, *Considérations Politiques et Militaires sur la Suisse*, *Manuel d'Artillerie*, and *Idées Napoléoniennes*. While imprisoned in the fortress of Ham, he wrote his *Aux Mânes de l'Empereur*, *Fragments Historiques*, *Analyse de la Question de Suisse*, *Réponse à M. de Lamartine*, and *Extinction du Paupérisme*, besides assisting in editing the *Dictionnaire de la Conversation*. While Emperor, he published his *Vie de Jules César*, intended to set forth the Napoleonic theory of politics, already announced in that famous passage of the first Napoleon's on *Les Sauveurs des Nations*.

Another political writer, and one of marked ability, was that Prévost-Paradol, whose suicide while ambassador at Washington was believed to have been caused by his despair when the Emperor allowed the war-party at court to force his judgment.

Lucien Anatole Prévost-Paradol (1829-1870) was born at Paris. Distinguished as journalist, he published at different times an *Éloge de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre*, *Revue de l'Histoire universelle*, *Du Rôle de la Famille dans l'Éducation*, *Études sur les Moralistes*, *Précis de l'Histoire universelle*, *De la*

*Liberté des Cultes en France, Essais de Politique et de la Littérature, and Quelques Pages d'Histoire contemporaine.*

Turning now to those historians, not so closely connected with the political history of their times, we find, among those whose fame had begun before the Restoration, Philippe Paul de Ségur, who was born at Paris in 1780. His father, the Comte Louis Philippe de Ségur, was for many years ambassador at St. Petersburg and a great favorite with the Empress Catharine II., and was himself the author of many works, among them *Pensées Politiques, Histoire de Frédéric Guillaume II., Contes, Fables, Chansons, et Vers, and Mémoires ou Souvenirs et Anecdotes.* The son was one of Napoleon's generals, and wrote the history of the disastrous Russian campaign in which he shared. This work is entitled *Histoire de Napoléon et de la Grande Armée en 1812.* It was a great success. He afterwards wrote a *Lettre sur la Campagne du Général Macdonald dans les Grisons*; and two histories, *Histoire de Russie et de Pierre le Grand, and Histoire de Charles VIII., Roi de France.*

Antoine Guillaume Prosper Brugière, Baron de Barante (1782–1866), was born at Riom. He was early employed in diplomatic service. On the Restoration, he was still employed in various public capacities, but kept up throughout his state service his devotion to letters. After the Revolution of 1830, he was again an ambassador, but retired from public life on the establishment of the republic in 1848. His great work was his *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne.* Among his other writings were *La Littérature française pendant le dix-huitième Siècle, Les Études littéraires et historiques, and Le Parlement et la Fronde.* In his History of the Dukes of Burgundy, he gives a simple, clear, and elegant narrative of events in a lively, dramatic style, telling his story without stopping to investigate and explain in the presence of the reader. It

is a bright, busy, and picturesque recital full of stirring incidents, luminously put before the mind in a most attractive manner.

Augustin Thierry and his brother Amédée were both historians, though the former has left a reputation far more brilliant and solid than the latter.

Jacques Nicolas Augustin Thierry (1795-1856) was born at Blois. His first work was *De la réorganisation de la Société Européenne*. This work considers the question of uniting all Europe under one government. Starting with so close an approximation to the Saint-Simonian doctrines, Thierry was soon a declared advocate and assistant of Saint-Simon. Later, he worked with Comte and Dunoyer. Having published in 1820 some letters, in a journal, on French history, he became interested in historical subjects, and in 1825 published his *Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands*, which at once gave him high rank among historians. His *Lettres sur l'Histoire* followed; but, after that, he became nearly blind in consequence of his arduous studies. Going to Hyères for his health, he met there and married Julie de Quérungal, a lady who had herself some literary reputation. His eyesight being partly restored, and his wife aiding him faithfully in his work, he next published *Dix Ans d'Études historiques*, and *Récits des Temps Mérovingiens*. His last work was an essay *Sur l'Histoire de la Formation et du Progrès du Tiers État*. His researches threw great light upon early French history and dissipated a host of errors which had been repeated without investigation by writer after writer.

Amédée Thierry was born at Blois in 1797. Besides his *Résumé de l'Histoire de Guyenne*, he wrote a book of profound historical research which gave him great reputation. This was his *Histoire de la Gaule sous la Domination des Romains*. Of this work his brother wrote, in his history of his own historical ideas and labors, given as a preface to his *Dix*

*Ans d'Études historiques*: "He was preparing to give to the public one half of the prolegomena of the history of France—the Keltic origins, with an account of the Gallic migrations, and a picture of Gaul under the Roman administration. For my own part, I undertook to give the other part, that is to say, the Germanic origins, and a picture of the great invasions which caused the ruin of the Western Roman empire. I experienced a heartfelt delight at the idea of this fraternal association—at the hope of fixing our two names on the double basis upon which must be placed the edifice of our national history."

I have already had occasion to mention Mignet, in speaking of Thiers, who studied law with him at Aix, whence they went to Paris together, to engage in literary life.

François Auguste Alexis Mignet was born at Aix in Provence in 1796. He began literary work as a journalist. Having given lectures on history which were well received, he was encouraged to undertake his *Histoire de la Révolution Française*, which treated that great series of events from a philosophical point of view. He takes, however, the same fatalist views which his friend Thiers held and expressed. After the Revolution of 1830, Mignet held office for a time; but that of 1848 drove him into private life. His later works were *Notices historiques*, *Mémoires sur des Questions d'Histoire*, *Histoire d'Antonio Pérès*, *Histoire des Négociations relatives à la Succession d'Espagne*, *Histoire de Marie Stuart*, *Histoire de l'Abdication et des dernières Années de Charles-Quint*, and *Rivalité de François I. et de Charles V.* His style is firm and pure, his matter the result of profound research and penetrating insight into the entanglements of politics. Conciseness is a marked characteristic of his style. The *Éloges* pronounced by Mignet must also be mentioned. They are striking pictures of a number of eminent men,

We come now to a historian of a different order. Michelet, the disciple of Vico and Niebuhr, the seeker after symbolic truths in historical facts, is a marked contrast to men like Thiers, Mignet, and the Thierrys. A poetic imagination, a rare ability in painting individuals and masses, a brilliant and glowing style, and a great fund of knowledge united to form in Michelet, in many respects, a model historian. But his visionary theories made his narrative too often unsound in its general tenor.

Jules Michelet (1798–1874) was born at Paris, studied under Villemain and Leclerc, and early became a Professor of History. His chief works were a *Précis de l'Histoire moderne*, a translation of Vico's works, *Introduction à l'Histoire universelle*, *Histoire romaine*, *Les Mémoires de Luther*, *Les Origines du Droit française*, *Histoire de France*, *Histoire de la Révolution française*, and *Les Femmes de la Révolution*.

Entering into controversy with the Jesuits, he brought out against them *Des Jésuites*; *Du Prêtre, de la Femme, et de la Famille*; and *Du Peuple*. He took no part in the stir of the Revolution of 1848, which swept so many literary men into the vortex of politics. But when the republic fell, he refused to take the oath of allegiance to Louis Napoleon. Besides his historical and controversial works, he wrote those fanciful and rhetorical and somewhat hysterical books by which perhaps he is best known in this country, *L'Oiseau*, *L'Insecte*, *L'Amour*, *La Femme*, *La Mer*, *La Sorcière*, *La Bible de l'Humanité*, and *Nos Fils*. The *Memoirs* of his wife may also be given a place here.

Merle D'Aubigné, as the historian of the Reformation, holds a high rank in the estimation of many in England and this country. His work, however, in the judgment of impartial critics, is as full of prejudice in one direction as Audin's bitter life of Luther is in the other.

Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné (1794–1872) was



born at Eaux-Vives, near Geneva. Studying under Neander at Berlin, he afterwards became pastor of the French Protestant church at Hamburg. Later, he lived in Brussels, and, later still, returned to Geneva and became Professor of Church History there. His great work was the *Histoire de la Réformation au seizième Siècle*. He wrote also *Le Protecteur, ou la République d'Angleterre aux Jours de Cromwell*; *Trois Siècles de Lutte en Ecosse*; *Histoire de la Réformation en Europe au Temps de Calvin*.

In closing the sketch of historical writers, I must merely mention such works as Dulaure's history of Paris; other writers on the Revolution besides those already mentioned—Lacretelle, Tissot, Labaume, Montgaillard, Cony, and De Norvins; Bignon's history of France under Napoleon; and the voluminous productions of Capefigue—his history of Philip Augustus; of the Restoration; of France in the Middle Ages; of the Reform, the League, and Henri IV.'s reign; of Richelieu, Mazarin, and the Fronde; of Louis XIV.'s reign; of the Regent Philip of Orleans; and of Europe during the Consulate and Empire of Napoleon.

Just as briefly must be named Mazure's *History of the English Revolution of 1688*; Armand Carrel's *History of the English Restoration*; Fauriel's *History of Southern Gaul* under the dominion of the German conquerors; Delécluze's *History of Florence*; St. Hilaire's *History of Spain*; and General Foy's *History of the Peninsular War*.

Duret, Wallon, Jung, Double, Jonquière, and Lacroix have also produced historical works.

Mention should also be made of three valuable works on the subject of the Huguenots: Peyrat's *Histoire des Pasteurs du Désert*; Coquerel's *Histoire des Églises du Désert*; and Crottet's *Histoire des Églises Réformées de Pons, Gemozac, et Montange, en Saintonge*.

Able histories of the civil war in the United States have been produced by the Comte de Paris and by Ernest Grasset.

## XIX.

## POETS AND PLAYWRITERS.

THE Restoration opens with two lyric poets, whose influence dominates the age. The one, the Poet of the People, is Béranger. The other, the Poet of the Sentimentalists, is Lamartine.

But, before we take up these poets, some mention must be made of the Hymn of Revolution, *La Marseillaise*, and its author, Rouget de Lisle. In the year 1792, a young officer of engineers, who had been a teacher of music, was urged by the Mayor of Strasbourg, a noble Alsatian, the Baron Dietrich, to compose a patriotic song for the ceremonies about to be observed in that city. He composed it that night, both words and music, and called it *Chant de Guerre de l'Armée du Rhin*. It was sung with great enthusiasm by the volunteers; but the song did not make its way to Paris, until Barbaroux and the young men of Marseille poured into Paris, chanting it. The Parisians named it the "*Marseillaise Hymn*." Heine wrote of this song, during the revolutionary year of 1830:

"A strong joy seizes me, as I sit writing. Music resounds under my window, and in the elegiac rage of its large melody, I recognize that hymn with which handsome Barbaroux and his companions once greeted the city of Paris. What a song! It thrills me with fiery delight. It kindles within me the glowing star of enthusiasm, and the swift rocket of satire. Swelling, burning torrents of song rush from the heights of freedom, in streams as bold as those with which the Ganges leap from the heights of Himalaya! I can write no more. This song intoxicates my brain. Louder and nearer advances the powerful chorus—*Aux armes, citoyens!*"

It is indeed a martial chant of wonderful power. Few songs have so stirred the souls of men.

When we come to Béranger, we find that he is to be viewed under two aspects, as a political power, and as a poet. We have already seen how strong a force was arrayed against Bourbonism in the parliamentary eloquence of such men as Constant, Foy, and Royer-Collard, by the socialist ferment, and by the stinging pamphlets of Courier and De Cormenin. But the songs of Béranger made their work tenfold easier by creating a political atmosphere in which the fire of free speech could live.

Pierre Jean de Béranger (1780-1857) was born at Paris in the house of his mother's father, a tailor in the Rue Montorgueil. He seems to have been early indoctrinated in republican principles by his aunt with whom he lived for a time at Péronne. A born song-writer, he early began to pour forth his thoughts and fancies in verse. His songs not finding a market, he sent some of them to Lucien Bonaparte, already famous for his devotion to literature. By him he was warmly encouraged and helped in the most delicate manner, for which Béranger was always deeply grateful. By Désaugiers, the then acknowledged lyrist of France, who recognized his merit, he was introduced to the choice spirits of the day, constituting the *Caveau*, a social club of poets, dramatists, journalists, painters, and musicians, meeting at a café near the Palais Royal. This was in 1809. Désaugiers had read Béranger's little satire, *Le Roi d'Yvetot*, and predicted his future fame. By Lucien Bonaparte's influence, Béranger received a small governmental appointment which gave him a sufficient support and left him leisure for literary work. During the Hundred Days, Napoleon offered him the post of censor, but this he declined.

In 1815, he published his first collection of songs, which brought him at once great popularity. When he next published, some of his songs brought

down upon him the vengeance of the government. One in particular, *Les Adieux à la Gloire, Décembre 1820*, was too bitter not to awaken the resentment of the Ministry. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in the debtor's prison of Sainte-Pélagie and to pay a fine of five hundred francs. His works, however, were so popular as to yield profits which fully indemnified him for all losses. His next publication brought him again under the frown of the government. This time his sentence was nine months in the prison of La Force and a fine of ten thousand francs. His friends paid the fine, and the government only succeeded in advertising him as a political martyr. The songs of Béranger became a great power in France and one of the agencies which expelled the Bourbons for the second time.

Under Louis Philippe, Béranger's friends became the rulers of the state. But the poet refused to profit by the change. It was an age of literary statesmen, and Béranger was one of the very few men of literary fame who did not take the political fever. His publisher, Perrotin, treated him generously, and the poet lived at his ease and was content. After the Revolution of 1848, he was elected a member of the Constituent Assembly, but he soon resigned this public trust. When Louis Napoleon overthrew the republic, feeling how much he owed to the work Béranger had done in keeping the memory of the first Empire in the hearts of the people, he urged the poet to accept some reward at his hands. But Béranger, though tempted by the charming importunity of the Empress Eugénie, resolutely kept his independence. He had not flattered the first Emperor during the time of his power, and he refused to bind himself in his old age to the support of the nephew. He died at the ripe old age of seventy-five, honored at the last by a funeral escort of a hundred thousand men in

arms, the government fearing the excitement of the people on such an occasion.

His songs are of many kinds, the frivolous and impure, the deeply feeling and impassioned, the gay and joyous, the keenly satirical, the tender, and the lofty in tone. Sometimes he sings his country's glory and misfortunes, the grandeur of the Empire, and the woeful fall of the soldier Emperor. Sometimes his strain is of liberty and equality, the rights of man, individualized into the right of the Frenchman to rule himself. Sometimes his theme is purely of practical politics under a corrupt and corrupting government, and takes the form of a bitter satire like *Monsieur Judas*. Sometimes his songs are gay, sprightly, and humorous, such as *Roger Bontemps* or *Le Petit Homme Gris*. Sometimes the shams and oppressions of the passing time make every line thrill with revolutionary throbs. His higher strains are real odes. Nothing can be finer than *Mon Âme*, or *Le Dieu des Bonnes Gens*, or *Le Cinq Mai*, or *La Bonne Vieille*, or *Mon Habit*. Such noble effusions condone the offense of his shocking *Madame Grégoire*, *Ma Grand'mère*, and similiar outrages on decency.

He knew what he could do, and wisely confined himself to that. When urged by Lebrun to apply for a chair in the Academy, he declined in a graceful letter in which he said: "I am only a singer, gentlemen; let me die a singer." It would have been better for his fame, had he restricted himself to even less than what he could do, and blotted many a ribald song before it reached the hand of the printer. His works furnish an apt illustration of the truth, that there are cases in which a part is greater than the whole.

Lamartine was a literary worker of greater pretensions, but the quality of his work was neither so fine nor so strong. Still his writings were immensely popular in their day, and have warm admirers even in this generation. In spite, too, of a

taint of vanity which was his most marked weakness, his character was a right noble one.

Alphonse de Lamartine (1790–1869) was born at Mâcon. In his *Memoirs* he gives a charming recital of the simple home-life in which he grew up, and of the troubles which his family underwent during the Reign of Terror. He traveled in Italy in his youth, and again after the fall of Napoleon. In 1820, the publication of his *Méditations Poétiques* won him renown and a position on the staff of the French embassy at Naples, and, later, at Florence. He married an English lady; published his *Nouvelles Méditations Poétiques*, his *Mort de Socrate*, and his *Dernier Chant de Childe Harold*; fought a duel with Colonel Pépé; produced his *Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses*; and travelled in the East. On his return from the Levant, he entered public life, became a distinguished orator in the Chamber, published in his *Voyage en Orient*, an account of his Eastern pilgrimage, and put forth successively his narrative poems, *Jocelyn* and *La Chute d'un Ange*, and his confused and rhetorical *Histoire des Girondins*. When the Revolution of 1848 came, he was perhaps the foremost man in France; but he nobly threw away his popularity by refusing to authorize the violence of the anarchists of that critical period. The overthrow of the republic by Louis Napoleon put an end to his public career. His other works were his *Élégies*, *Epîtres*, *Confidences*, *Histoire de la Révolution française*, *Cour familier de la Littérature*, *Fleur d'Aliza*, and *Histoire de la Restauration*.

There is undoubtedly both passion and imagination in his poems, and the lyric vein is strong in him. But to a foreign ear the sentiment does seem overstrained, and the tender melancholy too often savors of affectation. To the modern Frenchman the muse of Lamartine seems almost as insipid as to the foreigner; and the criticism of our day detects a flavor in almost all the fine writing admired by that generation which our taste stamps as "not

genuine." His verse, however, has great charm from its melody and its elegant smoothness. The prevailing element in his earlier poems was their deep seriousness, their expression of religious ecstasy in the presence of nature's loveliness—in fine, the blending of religious sentiment with æsthetic sentiment, both very vague and somewhat crude. Such are *Le Lac*, *Le Vallon*, *Le Golfe de Baïa*, and *Le Temple*. The success of *Jocelyn* adds one more instance to the many proofs literature furnishes us of the charm for the ordinary reader a story has that is told in verse. The taste for romance and the taste for poetry are gratified at the same time. Walter Scott's, Moore's and Byron's romantic poems, Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, and the younger Bulwer's *Lucile* are all evidences of the value of a distinct story in making poetry acceptable to the masses. For this reason, Tennyson's *Princess* and *Idyls of the King* will always be the most popular of his poems.

By different sections of the public both Béranger and Lamartine were idolized during a great part of their lives. But, if Lamartine's fame as a poet has undergone great obscurity for a number of years, the day will never come when his conduct during the Revolution of 1848 shall not be set down to his honor as man and patriot. Of that splendid action Bulwer-Lytton happily says:

"When Alphonse Lamartine, by an immortal speech, in which there is no wit and no sparkle, struck down to his feet the red flag, we recognize intuitively the difference between the maxim-maker's knowledge of the conventional world [He has been speaking of La Rochefoucauld's cynical *Maxims*] and the poet-orator's knowledge of the universal human heart. Honor to Alphonse Lamartine's knowledge of the heart in that moment which saved the dignity of France and the peace of Europe, no matter what were his defects in the knowledge of the world—defects by which rulers destined to

replace him learned to profit! Honor to that one triumph of poetry put into action!"

The passion of regret for the glories which France had won under the star of Napoleon, and lost with the return of the Bourbons, had inspired Béranger to fire the hearts of his countrymen with indignation against the new order of things. The same impulse produced the *Messéniennes* of Delavigne, and the same popular sympathy went out to meet and to welcome his strains.

Jean François Casimir Delavigne (1793-1843) was born at Havre. He published his elegies when the soil of France was still humbled by the presence of the allied armies, borrowing his title from Barthélemy's account in the *Voyage d'Anacharsis* of how Tyrtæus had stirred the souls of the Lacedæmonians in their wars with the Messenians. De Véricour says of these elegies, that many of them are remarkable for their rich coloring, splendid imagery, energy of thought, and metrical harmony; and he specifies the *Waterloo*, *Parthénope*, and *Napoléon* as among the finest. *La Parisienne* was written under the impulse of enthusiasm awakened by the July revolution. Casimir Delavigne refused employment under Louis Philippe, and devoted himself to the production of plays. The chief of these were *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*, *Les Comédiens*, *Marino Faliero*, *Louis XI.*, *Les Enfants d'Édouard*, *Don Juan d'Autriche*, and *La Fille du Cid*. In his dramatic works he tried to blend the principles and spirit of the classic tragedy with those of the romantic drama. But Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and Alfred de Vigny had, after the Revolution of 1830, boldly forsaken the old school and declared war with its whole spirit and method, and put upon the stage dramas conceived in the romantic spirit; and the efforts of Casimir Delavigne were not able to restore the popularity of the older system. He was successful, however, in comedy. His



*École des Vieillards*, brilliantly performed by Talma and Mademoiselle Mars, brought him a triumph, which ought to have tempted him to renewed efforts in that branch of literary art. Retiring to Lyon for change of air, when his health began to give way, he died in that city. After his death appeared his *Ballades italiennes*, which revealed the fine lyrical ability he possessed.

Among the poets of this period must also be named Madame Desbordes-Valmore (1787–1859), whose literary labors comprised elegiac and idyllic verse, fables, and romances. Tenderness and pathos, gentle piety, and sweet consolation are her special qualities. Her romance, *Une Raillerie de l'Amour*, has its scene in the days of the Empire. Others were *Les Veillées des Antilles* and *L'Atelier d'un Peintre*. The poems were published under the titles of *Élégies et Romances*, *Pleurs*, and *Pauvres Fleurs*.

Alexandre Soumet (1788–1845), another poet of this period, produced elegies, tragedies, and epics. *La Pauvre Fille* is considered a masterpiece in delicacy of sentiment and beauty of style. His tragedies were *Saül*, *Clytemnestre*, *Jeanne d'Arc*, *Elisabeth de France*, *Cléopâtre*, and *Norma*. His epics were *Jeanne d'Arc* and *La Divine Épopée*.

Alexandre Guiraud (1788–1847) wrote a great number of tragedies, the finest of which was his *Macchabées ou le Martyre*. He also produced *Poèmes et Chants Élégiques*.

Émile Deschamps, who was born at Bourges in 1791, translated some of Shakespeare's plays, Schiller's "Bell," and other works, and published a book of original poems, *Les Poésies des Crèches*, which are graceful and elegant.

Arsène Ancelet (1794–1854), born at Hâvre, was successful on the stage with his plays of *Louis IX.*, *Le Maire du Palais*, *Fiesque*, and *Olga*. He gained some distinction also by his poem of *Marie de Brabant*, his romance of *L'Homme du Monde*,

and his *Epîtres Familières*. His style is pure and elegant.

Jean Reboul (1796-1864), the baker-poet of Nîmes, was a follower of Lamartine. Besides his *Odes* and his *Élégies*, he produced a poem in ten cantos, called *Le Dernier Jour du Monde*.

Madame Amable Tastu was born at Metz in 1798. She won fame first by her *Éloge de Madame de Sévigné*. Her *Éducation Maternelle* and her *Histoire de la Littérature* have also taken rank among the standard works for the young. Her finest poems were *La Vieille de Noël*, *L'Étoile de la Lyre*, *Le Retour à la Chapelle*, and *Le Dernier Jour de l'Année*, the last being regarded by French critics as a masterpiece of touching thought expressed in most harmonious verse.

But it was the romantic school of poets who carried everything before them in the great revolution which literary taste began to undergo about the time of the political revolution of 1830. The chief of these were De Vigny, Hugo, and Dumas; and the stage was their field of battle with the old classic taste.

The new school, as has been said, inspired by the strong spirit of reaction against the taste of the old Bourbon period and by the study of English literature, insisted upon the free representation of mingled comedy and tragedy, as they are found in life. They also forsook the fields of ancient history and mythology, which had furnished materials for most of the productions of the earlier playwrights, and ransacked all history for suitable dramatic situations. Unfortunately, there was too often a preference for the horrible and the grotesque.

Alfred Victor, Comte de Vigny (1797-1863) was born at Loches in Touraine. He served in the army for a time; but, marrying in 1826 a wealthy Englishwoman, he withdrew from the service and gave his time to literature. His taste is pure and refined. In the war with the classic

school, his course was moderate. Before 1830, he had published several volumes of poems and his famous historical romance of *Cinq-Mars*. After that period, he published one or two novels; but, in the year that followed the Revolution, he put on the stage a play which had a powerful influence in winning popularity for the romantic drama. This was his *Maréchale d'Ancre*, the scene of which belongs to the same period as that of his romance of *Cinq-Mars*—the age of Louis XIII. He also produced *Le More de Venise*, taken from "Othello," and *Chatterton*, founded on his story of *Stello ou Les Diables Bleus*.

*Cinq-Mars* is an able delineation of the condition of France under the rule of Richelieu, and still retains its place among the recognized classics of French literature. De Vigny's *Servitude et Grandeur Militaire*, however, is regarded by the critics as a still abler work than *Cinq-Mars*. It is a collection of stories illustrative of military life, and is full of admirable reflections. It is tinged too with a tone of melancholy which makes it very attractive to meditative minds. Another work of De Vigny's was his *Consultations du Docteur Noir*. After his death some poems of his entitled *Les Destinées* were published.

But the foremost spirit of the romantic school was that versatile writer, Victor Hugo, poet, dramatist, romancer, pamphleteer, and politician, who has been well styled "half-charlatan, half genius."

Victor Marie, Vicomte Hugo, was born at Besançon in 1802. His father was a soldier of Napoleon. His mother was a native of La Vendée and hence a devoted royalist. Victor Hugo was early in the field as a poet. His genius being essentially lyric, his first important productions were *Odes et Ballades*, the Odes being royalist in tone and the Ballads mediæval in subject. To these succeeded—with many other works intervening—his poems of *Les Orientales*, *Les Chants du Crépuscule*, *Les Rayons*

et les Ombres, *Les Voix Intérieures*, and *Les Feuilles d'Automne*. Bold in imagery, picturesque, defiant of all the old rules of restriction, these poems had a singular effect upon the age and did more than perhaps anything else, except his plays, to secure the triumph of the principles of the romantic school. His play of *Marion Delorme*, which appeared on the eve of the Revolution of 1830, was the strongest agent in bringing about this change in public taste. He had before put on the stage *Cromwell* and *Hernani*; but these were greatly inferior dramas to *Marion Delorme*. His other plays were *Le Roi s'amuse*, *Ruy Blas*, *Marie Tudor*, *Lucrèce Borge*, *Angelo*, *Les Burgraves*, and *Torquemada*, in all of which he takes great liberties with history and is often offensive to common decency of feeling, but never fails in a certain spasmodic power which strikes the imagination. The evident straining after effect; the delight in conceiving monstrosities; the crudity of perpetual antithesis in style, character, and situation; the lavish use of lurid tints; the tedious working over and over the meaningless parts of the picture, and putting in minute and insignificant details, are blots that must make the greater part of his work forfeit the title of really high art.

His romances were written on the same system. Originality was too often sought at the expense of good taste. Yet there is power in them all, a wild erratic genius that one must admire in some sort, even while condemning. The chief of these were *Hans d'Islande*, a grotesque romance of the Northern regions; *Les Derniers Jours d'un Condamné*; that great, wild creation, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, a romance of Paris in the fifteenth century, a real prose-poem of fantastic but wonderfully picturesque conceptions; *Claude Gueux*; *Bug-Jargal*, an amusingly incredible negro story; the five-fold romance of the angelic convict, Jean Valjean, *Les Misérables*; *L'Homme Qui Rit*; *Quatre-vingt-treize*; and *Les*

*Travailleurs de la Mer*. In spite of the extravagance of thought, conception, and language, these are all works of remarkable power.

Meanwhile, he was living a life of mingled storm and sunshine. Louis Philippe made him a Peer of France. But he sympathized with the Revolution of 1848, and became one of the leaders in the short-lived republic. Prince Napoleon warned him of the designs of Louis Napoleon, and urged him and his party to take measures to prevent the *coup d'état*. But Victor Hugo declined to move, on the ground that illegal measures to prevent illegality are not justifiable. The threatened evil came, and Hugo remaining irreconcilable was banished by the Emperor. The exiled poet went to live in the isle of Jersey, and from that retreat launched the bitterest pamphlets against the successful criminal. *Napoléon le Petit*, the book of poems called *Les Châtiments*, and *L'Histoire d'un Crime* were all inspired by his wrath at this event. On the fall of the Second Empire, he came back to France.

Notes made upon his original manuscripts—which he has carefully preserved—show, it is said, that Victor Hugo has always written with great rapidity. His drama of *Cromwell*, written at the age of twenty-five, was finished in three months. *Notre-Dame de Paris* cost him four months and a half. *Marion Delorme* was written in twenty-four days; *Hernani*, in twenty-six; *Le Roi s'amuse*, in twenty; *Ruy Blas*, in two months and three days; and *Les Burgraves*, in thirty-nine days. His death made a greater impression than that of any man of our time.

The success of the romantic school on the stage was aided materially by Vitet's historical plays, written for the closet and not intended to be acted.

Louis Vitet was born at Paris in 1801. His fame rests chiefly on his art-criticism, in which his excellent taste and the clearness and precision of

his style make him an acknowledged master. He published also—besides his *Histoire de Dieppe* and his *Vie de Le Sueur*, a drama of the time of the League, called *Les Barricades*, in which Henri III. and the Duc de Guise appear as prominent characters; another drama of the same period, called *Les États de Blois*; and still another, called *La Mort de Henri III.*

Among the minor poets of the period before the Second Empire must be briefly named Porchat, author of the dramas, *Jeanne d'Arc* and *Winkelried*; the novels, *Les Colons du Village* and *Trois Mois sous la Neige*; and poems published under the title *Fables et Paraboles*.

Under the same head comes Julien Auguste Pélage Brizeux (1803–1858), author of *Marie*, a graceful fiction in which the simple life and picturesque features of the Breton peasantry are portrayed, and of a poem called *Les Bretons*.

Here also comes Joseph Méry (1798–1866), born at Marseille, an improviser of odes, satires, romances, dramas, comedies, and criticisms. He worked at first in concert with Barthélemy. His natural gifts were remarkable, but he lacked the patience to produce finished works. His brightest productions were *Nuits au Glaives*, *Héva*, *La Guerre du Nizam*, *Les Confessions de Marion Delorme*, *Nuits d'Orient*, *Un Carnaval de Paris* and *Poésies intimes*.

By the side of these must be placed Edgard Quinet, born in 1803, translator of Herder, author of an ambitious epic novel called *Ahasvérus* and a poem entitled *Napoléon*, neither of which met with marked success. He attained distinction, however, as a historian by his work, *Les Époques chevaleresques du XII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*.

It was to the elder Dumas that Hugo and De Vigny owed most for able help in fighting out the battle of romanticism with classicism. By himself, and also with the aid of co-workers, he issued a host of pieces for the stage, as well as of romances,

wonderful in their vivacity and brilliancy, and by reason of their sensational incidents, lucidity, lively coloring, and brisk dialogue admirably suited to win popularity.

Alexandre Dumas (1803-1870) was the son of General Dumas and the grandson of the Marquis de la Pailleterie and a negro woman. He was born at Villers-Cotterets. His first appearance as a writer was in a volume of *Nouvelles*; but it was three years later and just on the eve of the Revolution of 1830 that he acquired fame by the production on the stage of his first and best play, *Henri III. et sa Cour*. The characters are presented in this piece with great force and originality, and the plot is admirably developed. From this time he became a great man in the eyes of the Parisians, and one of the greatest of men in his own estimation—for his vanity was prodigious.

He produced also for the stage *Antony*, *Christine*, *Thérèse*, *Angèle*, *Kean*, *Don Juan de Marana*, *Caligula*. Some of these plays are wretched stuff, and others are stolen goods. His system of using hack-writers to work up a book, which he would then embellish with some of his characteristic passages, lifted into gaiety by sheer flow of animal spirits, enabled him to flood the market with literature of very varying quality. His best romances were *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*, and *La Reine Margot*. Thackeray speaks warmly of these books, as engaging companions of the youthful imagination.

"Of your heroic heroes," he says, "I think our friend Monseigneur Athos, Count de la Fère, is my favorite. I have read about him from sunrise to sunset with the utmost contentment of mind. He has passed through how many volumes? Forty? Fifty? I wish for my part there were a hundred more, and would never tire of him rescuing prisoners, punishing ruffians, and running scoundrels through the midriff with his most graceful rapier. Ah, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, you are a magnificent trio."

As to Dumas' *Mémoires*, the reader will find those pleasantly garrulous and amusingly coxcombical revelations as entertaining as his romances. His vivacious and slightly impudent manner makes him always amusing.

But of all writers for the stage under the restored Bourbons and the Second Empire, Scribe was the most sparkling and the most unwearied. His pieces were chiefly vaudevilles; and, as he had many collaborators, they were produced with amazing rapidity. The plots were taking; the dialogue, quick, light, and bright; the air of the scene delicately mocking; and there was just enough sensibility to move a merry audience to a momentary tenderness without exciting deep emotion.

Augustin Eugène Scribe (1791–1861) was born at Paris. His most striking pieces were *Bertrand et Raton*, *Le Mariage d'Argent*, *Une Chaîne*, *Le Verre d'Eau*, *La Camaraderie*, *La Bataille de Dames*, *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, *Les Contes de la Reine de Navarre*, and *Les Doigts de Fée*. In the composition of more than four hundred pieces which bear his name he was aided by Brazier, Carmouche, Delavigne, Delestre, Dumersan, Dupin, Duveyrier, Legouvé, Lemoine, Mazères, Mesleville, Rougemont, Varner, and others. He wrote also the libretti for a number of operas, besides writing several novels.

Among the poets who stood side by side with Hugo in the struggle for the principles of the romantic school was Henri Auguste Barbier (1805–1882), born at Paris. He came into notice just after the Revolution of 1830 by the publication of his *Iambes*, satirical poems of great wildness and vehemence. Later, he put forth, in his *Pianto*, a harmonious and elegant poem, his impressions of Italy. To this succeeded his *Lazare*.

Léon Gozlan (1806–1866), born at Marseille, may be classed among the play writers, as he produced many dramas, comedies, and vaudevilles, which were



well received. He was, however, also the author of a vast number of novels and romances. French critics find fault with his style, as injured by meretricious graces to an extent which good taste must condemn.

Madame de Girardin, born Delphine Gay, at Aix-la-Chapelle (1804-1855), is another who may be classed among the contributors to the literature of the stage, although she won fame as a novelist also. She was in her day the pet of French literary society, having many personal charms, not the least among which was her unaffected simplicity and sweetness of character. Hers was one of the last of the salons, after her marriage with the journalist, Émile de Girardin. Hugo, Lamartine, Dumas, Sainte-Beuve, Méry, Gautier, Sue, and Balzac were all at different periods frequenters of her house. She gave to the theatre, besides lively comedies like *Le Chapeau d'un Horloger*, one piece of graceful sentiment and a quiet vein of pathos, which still keeps the stage. This is *La Joie fait Peur*. She also published a collection of poems. But her novels were her most important works. Many of these were solely her own work; but one, *La Croix de Berny*, she wrote in concert with Gautier, Méry, and Sandeau. Her most striking romance was one entitled *Le Lorgnon*. Her *Lettres Parisiennes*, published, as well as the novels, under the pseudonym of the Vicomte de Launay, are very lively, and are regarded as giving a perfect picture of French society from 1836 to 1848.

Both Théophile Gautier and Sainte-Beuve were responsible in their time for some poetry; but the one is so much better known as a story-teller and the other as a critic, that they hardly belong among the poets. The same thing may be said of Edmond About, his failure as a writer of comedy and his success as a teller of stories relegating him to another part of this work than this which treats of playwrights.

Ernest Legouv   is therefore the next on our list. He was born at Paris in 1807. Alone, or in concert with others, he produced a number of successful dramatic works, of which the most striking were *Guerrero*, *M  d  e*, and *Un Jeune Homme qui ne fait Rien*. He wrote also the romances of *B  atrix* and *Edith de Falsen*, as well as a work entitled *Histoire morale des Femmes*.

G  rard de Nerval (1808–1855) was born at Paris, and produced *  l  gies nationales et Satires politiques*, a translation of "Faust," and, in prose, his *Voyage en Orient*, besides some romances.

Charles Lafont (1809–1864) was born at Li  ge. His two tragedies, *Ivan de Russie* and *Daniel*, were much praised for elegance of style. He wrote also a poetic drama entitled *Un Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu*, some vaudevilles, and his *L  gendes de la Charit  *.

Madame Louise R  voil-Colet was born at Aix in 1810. Besides publishing a great many romances, translations, and dramatic pieces, she wrote poetry of graceful elegance.

L  onard Sylvain - Jules Sandeau was born at Aubusson in 1811. He began his literary career by working in concert with Madame Dudevant, and when they parted, she used the half of his name as her *nom de plume*. Besides many charming romances, he wrote a great number of able comedies. The principal romances of his workmanship were *Madame de Somerville*, *Mademoiselle de la Seigli  re*, *Catherine*, *Mariana*, *Valcreuse*, *Sacs et Parchemins*, and *La Maison de Penarvan*. The best comedies included several of these tales dramatized, and also *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*.

Victor de Laprade was born at Montbrison in 1812. His poems were a collection called *Odes et Po  mes*, the chief of which was *Psych  *; another, called *Po  mes   vang  liques*; and still another, called *Idylles h  roiques*.

Joseph Autran was born at Marseille in 1813.

His first poem was an ode in honor of Lamartine, entitled *Départ pour l'Orient*. His later poems were *Ludibria Ventis*, *Poèmes de la Mer*, *Mélianah*, *Laboureurs et Soldats*, and *La Vie rurale*. His tragedy of *La Fille d'Eschine* was a success. He also wrote in prose a work called *Italie et Semaine sainte à Rome*.

Madame Anaïs Ségalas was born at Paris in 1813. Her poetry is likened by the critics to that of Madame Tastu.

François Ponsard (1814–1867) was born at Vienne in Dauphiné. His first publication was a translation of Byron's "Manfred." He next wrote a tragedy called *Lucrèce*, which was brought out as a re-action in the classic taste against the romantic school. It had a great success, and is still ranked as a standard work. Later, he produced *Agnès de Méranie*, *Charlotte Corday*, and a comedy called *Horace et Lydie*, to which Rachel's acting gave brilliant success. *L'Honneur et l'Argent* again brought fame to him after the failure of his tragedy of *Ulysse* and his poem of *Homère*. It was remarkable for its purity and high tone. His comedy of *La Bourse* was too hastily produced, and did not sustain the reputation he had won. His last works were *Le Lion Amoureux* and the drama of *Galilée*.

It is with design that I have sketched rapidly the places of these minor poets in a general account of French literature like this, before taking up Alfred de Musset, who, as a perfect representative of the *blasé* type of brilliant young Frenchmen of the Restoration period, deserves more extended notice.

Louis Charles Alfred de Musset (1810–1857) was born at Paris. At twenty he came before the public with his *Contes en Vers*, which at once gave him high rank among the poets of his day. The sensuousness of these poems was as noticeable as their elegance. Later, he published *Nouvelles* in prose, *Comédies et Proverbes*, and two *Recueils de*

*Poésies*, consisting of elegies, tales, satires, songs, sonnets, and other forms of verse. His comedies still hold the stage and are full of grace and wit. Few writers for the theatre command with such ease the graceful tone of the best society. In skepticism and license he has been compared to Byron and to the younger Bulwer; but none deny the exquisite beauty, tenderness, and power of the greater part of what he has written. There is a quality in his best work, hard to define but full of attraction to the cultivated taste, an airy lightness of touch with the suggestion of strength in its very ease. His *liaison* with Madame Dudevant, and its subsequent rupture, was the occasion of several books on both sides by themselves and their friends; but the literature of *Elle et Lui* and *Lui et Elle* is not particularly edifying.

Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) should be mentioned along with De Musset, as an extreme type of the same pessimist spirit. He was the chief of those poets outside of society who delighted in the name of "Bohemians." There is a sombre beauty in many of his poems, which entitles them, in spite of their grossness and affectation of diabolism, to some share of that admiration which genius in any form must always elicit. He had a great admiration for Edgar Allan Poe, and made an exceedingly able translation of his works.

Octave Feuillet, one of the most delightful of living authors, was born at Saint-Lo in 1812. He has been best known in this country as a romancer. But he has also been brilliantly successful with comedies, vaudevilles, and other stage pieces, rivaling Alfred de Musset in that exquisite grace in which he excelled. Feuillet's finest romances were *Bellah*, *La petite Comtesse*, *Le Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre*, *Sibylle*, *M. de Camors*, and *Le Journal d'une Femme*. His best pieces for the stage were dramatizations of some of these romances, and *La Nuit Terrible*, *Le Bourgeois de*

Rome, *La Crise*, *Péril en la Demeure*, *La Fée*, *Le Village*, *Dalila*, *La Tentation*, *Montjoye*, *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, *Le Cas de Conscience*, *Julie*, and *La Clé d'Or*. His latest play, just announced, is *Un Roman Parisien*.

Émile Augier was born at Valence in 1820. His little two-act comedy, *La Ciguë*, first brought him into notice. With Ponsard he then stood forth as ready to form the nucleus of a reaction against the excesses of romanticism on the stage. His principal pieces have been *Un Homme de Bien*, *L'Aventurière*, *Gabrielle*, *Philiberte*, *Les Effrontés*, *La Pierre de Touche*, *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*, and, above all, *La Jeunesse*, one of the best of modern comedies. Lively wit, skilful art, strong and piquant language, are his most marked qualities.

Pierre Dupont was born at Lyon in 1821. A book, called *Les Paysans*, containing six songs, gave him popularity, the airs as well as the words being his own composition. He wrote also the text for the Legend of the Wandering Jew, illustrated by Gustave Doré.

Henri Murger (1822-1861) was a Bohemian after Baudelaire's own heart. His *Le Bonhomme Jadis* is one of the pieces most frequently played at the Comédie française. *Adeline Protat*, *Le Pays latin*, *Les Buveurs d'Oau*, and *Les Vacances de Camille* are considered his best productions. He is most famous, however, for having produced *La Vie de Bohême*, which describes the reckless, miserable, and yet from time to time wildly and desperately gay life of the literary gipsies of Paris.

Victorien Sardou, still the inexhaustible caterer for the stage-loving public of Paris, was born at Paris in 1831. Representing at the Odéon, when still quite young, *La Taverne des Étudiants*, a three-act comedy, he suffered the discouraging experience of an ignominious failure. Working then for six years before again trying his fortune with the public, he brought out a comedy called *Les Pattes de*

*Mouche*, which was received with great applause. He was from that time a favorite with the Parisian public. His best pieces were *Les Femmes Fortes*, *Nos Intimes*, *Les Ganaches*, *La Perle noire*, *Les Vieux Garçons*, *La Famille Benoiton*, and *Nos bons Villageois*.

Most of the popular novelists of our day have put one or more pieces on the stage. But they will come more fitly before us in another place, especially as their plays are generally dramatized from their novels. Such, for instance, is Jules Claretie's *Monsieur le Ministre*; and such is the *Père de Martial*, of the Louisianian Albert Delpit.

Adolphe Belot and Jules Verne are among these romancers, who are also producing plays and fairy-pieces for the stage. Other living dramatists who may be named are Ferdinand Dugué, Emile Bergerat, Auguste Vacquerie, François Coppée, Edouard Pailleron, Eugène Guiraud, Grangeneuve, and Marras.

Something must be said of the extraordinary revival of Provençal poetry. The ancient poetry of Provence was in no sense a part of French literature. The race which created it was not under the dominion of French kings. The language in which it took form was a cultivated tongue before the Trouvères had composed a single lay in the old French tongue. It is different, however, with the Provençal literature of recent production. The race from which the modern Provençal poets spring has long been a component part of the French nation; the language in which they express themselves is as recognized a *patois* or dialect of French as the Lowland Scottish is of English. The Provençal poets, then, have the same place in French literature as that held in English literature by writers like Burns and Hogg.

The most eminent of the Provençal poets of modern times, the "last of the Troubadours," as he has been called, was Jacques Jasmin (1798-1864).

He was born at Agen. In his *Soubenis* he gives a humorous account of his early life, stating that he was of humble birth and was taught the trade of a hair-dresser, which he considered not amiss, as it was concerned, as well as his other business of making poems, with head-work. His poems possess both pathos and wit; and that peculiar quality of rustic or childlike archness and freshness, which is the charm of dialect, is of course largely present in a poetry that springs so directly from the soil and has suffered no sophistication from books or the society of cities. Jasmin's chief works were *Lou Chalibari*, *L'Abuglo de Castel-Cuille*, and *Las Papilotos de Jasmin*.

Another of these Provençal poets, Frédéric Mistral, was born near Saint-Rémy in 1830. His poems have been numerous, the chief of them being his *Miréio*, of which a fine translation has been made by our American poet, Mrs. Margaret J. Preston.

## XX.

## ROMANCERS.

IN no field of literary labor has the harvest been so abundant in modern France, as in that of prose fiction. I shall not attempt to arrange and classify the writers of romance, but give them for the most part in chronological order. Some have been named already, because their productions entitled them to be ranked as poets or as workers for the stage, as well as romancers. Of this class were Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and Octave Feuillet.

The first on our list must be Nodier, Paul de Kock, and the writer who called himself Saintine.

Charles Nodier (1783-1844) was born at Besançon. He was an eminent philologist, a graceful poet, and a charming story-teller. Besides two linguistic works, the *Dictionnaire des Onomatopées* and the *Éléments du Linguistique*, he produced *Jean Sbogar*, *Thérèse Aubert*, *Adèle*, *Smarra*, *Trilby*, *Les Souvenirs de la Révolution et de l'Empire*, and *Les Contes fantastiques*.

To Saintine we owe the exquisite moral and religious romance of *Picciola*. His real name was Joseph Xavier Boniface (1797-1865), a native of Paris. His romances and poems were put forth under the pseudonym of Saintine, while to his comedies and vaudevilles, of which he wrote a vast number in concert with Scribe, he signed the name of Xavier. The story of the little prison-grown plant, which converts Charney from skepticism, is his finest romance, and it is a masterpiece. Among his other stories may be named *Mutilé* and *Les Soirées de Jonathan*.



Charles Paul de Kock (1794–1871), born at Plassy, near Paris, besides stories in verse and vaudevilles, wrote upwards of fifty novels. His romances are frankly coarse, but their gayety, their racy humor, and their truth to life—the sort of life led by fast young men in Paris—have given them a longer lease of life than they really deserve. Still, they are not so demoralizing as the more subtly depraving sentimental romances which came later from more powerful pens. Among his books may be mentioned *Les Enfants de Boulevard*, *Une Grappe de Groseille*; *Ninie Guignon*, *La Fée aux Amourettes*; *Les Petits Ruisseaux*, *Ma Petite Cousine*, *Le Démon de l'Alcove*, *Ni Fille, ni Femme*, *Friquette*, and *Un Jeune Homme mystérieux*.

His son, Henri de Kock, has followed in the same path. *La Dame aux Emeraudes*, *Minette*, and *L'Amant de Lucette* may be named as samples of his writings.

Rodolphe Toepffer (1799–1846), the son of an able painter, was a Genevese writer and professor of literature. His moral romances, *Nouvelles genevoises*, *Rosa et Gertrude*, and *Le Presbytère*, won him much reputation. His *Voyages en Zig-Zag* was a book of travel-sketches, which he illustrated himself. His essay on the Beautiful, under the title *Réflexions et Menus propos d'un Peintre Genevois* is an æsthetic treatise of great value.

Balzac deserves more extended mention than this sketch can afford him. Not only were his romances very numerous, but they were careful art-studies which entitle him to a higher place among French romancers than perhaps any other can justly claim.

Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850) was born at Tours. He wrote at first under various assumed names, and was long unsuccessful and very poor. Giving up at last the manner which he had borrowed from Pigault and Lebrun, and writing in an original style his *Les Derniers Chouans, ou la Bretagne en*

1800, he found his work for the first time well received by the public. After this book came his *Physiologie du Mariage*, *Scènes de la Vie Privée*, *Scènes de la Vie de Province*, *Scènes de la Vie Parisienne*, *Le Médecin de Campagne*, *Le Père Goriot*, *La Peau de Chagrin*, *Histoire Intellectuelle de Louis Lambert*, *La Recherche de l'Absolu*, *Les Parents Pauvres*, *Eugénie Grandet*, *Le Lis dans la Vallée*, *Le Curé de Village*, *Histoire de César Birotteau*, and a mystico-metaphysical novel entitled *Seraphita*. He is considered to have shown wonderful penetration into the mysteries of the female heart. In his *Contes Drolatiques*, he imitated the wild, fantastic humor of Rabelais, using also the quaint style of that author. He aspired to group all the varieties of human character into a complete whole, and described his romances under the general title of *Comédie humaine*. There can be no question as to his wonderful grasp of the methods of analysis in observing human nature. His fault lay in overworking minute details and losing sight of that symmetry which is essential to perfection in form. His literary habits were eccentric, and many curious stories are told of his mode of working after having gathered material for a novel. He married in later life a Polish lady, who had long lived with him.

Melchior Frédéric Soulié (1800–1847) was born at Foix. His romances glow with imagination, and have a fresh and sparkling style. Among the best were *Les Deux Cadavres*, *Le Comte de Toulouse*, *Le Vicomte de Béziers*, *Le Conseiller d'Etat*, and *Les Mémoires du Diable*.

Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870) took high rank as romancer, but he was also historian, playwright, and archæologist. He was born at Paris, the son of a distinguished painter. Mérimée made early acquaintance with English and Spanish literature, and came forward as an enthusiastic adherent of the romantic school. His first work, *Le Théâtre de*

*Clara Gazul*, purporting to be dramatic pieces translated from the Spanish, did not meet with success. His next, *La Guzla* (the name, an anagram of the earlier *nom de plume*) was an effort to popularize the folk-song of Illyria and Montenegro. It was much admired in Germany, but its popularity was confined to literary circles.

After the Revolution of 1830, Merimée entered public life, like so many of the literary men of the day. Meanwhile he kept writing for the reviews a series of wild and thrilling tales in a strong, clear, condensed style, a style of restrained power which made all his stories very fascinating. The chief of these was *Colomba*, a Corsican tale of horror. Others, equally well-told, were *Mattéo Falcone* and *L'Enlèvement de la redoute*. Besides these, his other most striking tales were *Arsène Guillot* and *Carmen*. The opera of *Carmen* is founded on this tale. His historical studies bore fruit in works on episodes in Roman history; an episode in Russian history, worked up in *Les Faux Démétrius*; and his *Chronique du Règne de Charles IX*. One of the ablest of these historical studies was his *La Jacquerie*, a study of one of the most frightful outbursts of ignorant and oppressed humanity in French history, a series of occurrences which was at once a prelude—though at a great distance in time—to the Revolution of 1789, and a prophecy of that tremendous convulsion.

Among the works of this polished cynic, but most gifted artist in word-painting, must also be named his fantasy-piece, *Vénus d'Ille*; *Le Double Méprise*, a picture of modern society; and the singular *Lettres à Une Inconnue*, which made so great a stir when they appeared shortly after his death. They seemed to have been addressed to some woman who possessed the fascinating qualities, though probably not the beauty, of Madame de Récamier, and who enjoyed the adoration of her admirer, but was able to be as obdurate to him as

that lady was to Benjamin Constant. She was an Englishwoman.

Eugène Sue, though now known best by the *Mysteries of Paris* and *The Wandering Jew*, began his fame by the production of sea-stories. In this line he ranks with Cooper and Marryatt, showing great fertility of fancy and that boyish spirit of fun and frolic which is so natural to the sailor. De Véricour names Corbière and Lecomte as other writers of nautical novels during the same period.

Marie Joseph Eugène Sue (1804-1857) was born at Paris. Becoming an army-surgeon, he served under the Duc d'Angoulême in the expedition into Spain. Transferred thence to the navy, he was present at the battle of Navarino, and saw enough of life at sea to fit him for writing those stories with which he began his literary career. Of his earlier works the chief were *Atar Gull*, a frightful story of revenge; *Salamander*, also full of horror; and *Vigie de Koatven*, the story of a prosperous villain. This indeed is the blot upon Sue's fiction. His villains always triumph.

After leaving the ocean as the scene of his tales, Sue, in the new field which he chose and in which he developed a socialist tendency, first showed his peculiar power in *Mathilde, ou les Mémoires d'une jeune Femme*. But his *Mystères de Paris* and *Le Juif Errant* were the works which really established his fame. They created wild excitement, and enriched their author, so large were the sales. His power in these romances is that acquired over the reader's imagination by complicated, intricate, and exciting plots, appealing strongly to the passion of curiosity. No English novelist has ever shown this art in anything like the same degree of skill as it is to be found in a goodly number of French romancers. These thrilling romances of Sue's were followed by *Martin, l'Enfant Trouvé*; *Les Sept Péchés Capitaux*; and *Les Mystères du Peuple*. In his later works he developed socialist tendencies.

He was in public life when the Second Empire came; and, being identified with the extreme wing of the republican party, he was banished by Louis Napoleon.

We now reach the most remarkable woman of recent times, the "George Sand" of literature. Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin, who became the Baronne Dudevant by her marriage, was born (1804-1876) at Paris. Her father was descended from the famous Marshal de Saxe. While still Mademoiselle Dupin, she was moved at one time to take the veil, but the reading of J. J. Rousseau's works changed her purpose. Married to the Baron Dudevant at an early age, she lived with him for nine years. At the end of that time, finding her wedded life intolerable and discovering that her husband had neither love for her nor confidence in her, she got him to consent to a formal separation, and went to Paris to engage in literary work. In concert with Jules Sandeau, she wrote *Rose et Blanche*. After parting with Sandeau, she kept by the advice of Delatouche, the editor of the *Figaro*, for which she wrote her earlier romances, the first half of Sandeau's name and signed her works George Sand, Delatouche holding that the public would not give a woman due credit for her writings. Her *Indiana* gave the first indication of her splendid powers. In these earlier works, her pent-up wrath at the broken illusions of the woman-heart thrown upon a cold, heartless, and corrupt world, found vent in a reckless plea for passion and a scorn for the marriage-tie, which would have utterly condemned her works with the moral part of the French reading public, had it not been for the fascinating style and enchanting glow of feeling which showed a freshness of heart that seemed incompatible with real depravity.

*Indiana* was followed by *Valentine*, *Lélia*, *Jacques*, *André*, *Leone Leoni*, and *Simon*. The delirium of passion and of outraged feeling seemed to pass

away with these earlier romances. Her travels in Italy and Spain may have had something to do with soothing her mind. The influence of Lamennais, too, who was then engaging her services as a writer for his journal, *Le Monde*, may have had some effect in awakening her to that spirit of Christian resignation which her *Lettres à Marcie* breathed. Certainly, the whole atmosphere of her literary work became purer and sweeter. *André* and *Simon* were a definite contrast in spirit to works like *Indiana* and *Lélia*. But she seems at all times to have been remarkably susceptible to influences from without, the influence of scenery and the influence of society. Many writers have spoken of her masculine tastes and masculine type of mind. No greater mistake, it seems to me, could be made. Few women have ever possessed in a higher degree than she the essentially feminine gift of assimilating through sympathy all the spirit, thoughts, and qualities of every man in whom she became deeply interested, and reproducing with definitely feminine art what she had thus absorbed. She was a highly gifted woman, doing in literature what every superior woman does in society, the written sexual transmutation of the one answering to the spoken and acted of the other. Her travels suggested *L'Uscoque*, *Les Maîtres Mosaisistes*, *Mauprat*, and *La Dernière Aldini*. Her studies in philosophical speculations bore fruit in the mystical *Spiridion*, and her essay in prose-poetry, *Les Sept Cordes de la Lyre*. Her political ideas took form in *Le Compagnon du Tour de France* and *Pauline*.

About this time, her literary success having secured her a comfortable maintenance, she obtained a divorce. In the *Revue Indépendante*, which she started with Viardot and Leroux, she published *Horace*, *Consuelo*, and *La Comtesse de Rudolstadt*. These were followed by *Jeanne* and *Le Meunier d'Angibault*. In all these later works, the political

tone is strongly democratic, and in the last-mentioned her views are decidedly socialistic.

She went back, however, at a later date, to purely literary romances. Such were *Isidora*, *Téverino*, *La Petite Fadette*, *François-le-Champi*, *Les Maîtres Sonneurs*, *La Filleule*, and, above all, that charming little prose idyll, *La Mare au Diable*.

Her *Letters d'un Voyageur* described "with pathos and animation the reminiscences of her youth, the course of her affections, the blight and desolation of her soul under accumulated sorrows; but she no longer speaks in a wrathful and passionate tone; her spirit is subdued and chastened; and she pours forth the natural and plaintive effusions of one wounded in the tenderest sensibilities, stricken as a mother, a friend, a lover, and a wife. The countries she has visited in her travels are also sketched with great force and vigor of delineation, which leaves a vivid impression on the mind of the reader." This is the judgment of De Véricour.

After the Revolution of 1848, she produced some pieces for the stage. Among her successes were *François-le-Champi*, *Claudie*, *Le Pressoir*, *Le Mariage de Victorine*, and *Maître Favilla*. Especially was *Le Marquis de Villemer* a striking dramatic success. Among her later works we may cite also *Les Beaux Messieurs de Bois-Doré*, *Jean de la Roche*, *Mademoiselle de la Quintinie*, and *La Confession d'une Jeune Fille*. Among those autobiographical pieces which, taken together, would make a large group of memoirs, were her *Histoire de Ma Vie*, *Journal d'un Voyageur pendant la Guerre* (published in 1871), and *Impressions et Souvenirs*.

Respecting her relations with a succession of men eminent in different spheres of art and literature, I choose to say nothing here, though there is quite a literature on that single subject.

The writer, whose works go by the name of De Stendhal, is stated by De Véricour to be Bayle, French Consul at Civita Vecchia not long before

1848. The pessimist view of life is that taken in his novels. They were *Rouge et Noir*, *La Chartreuse de Parme*, and *L'Abbesse de Castro*. Besides these, he produced biographies of Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio, a descriptive work, called *Promenade dans Rome*; a work on Italian painting, called *Histoire de la Peinture en Italie*, and a book of travels.

Émile Souvestre (1806–1854) was born at Morlaix in Bretagne. His amiable and cheerful spirit makes him a marked contrast to De Stendhal. His romances illustrate Breton life, with its romantic scenery, its rugged coast, and its simple people. *Les Derniers Bretons* was the first of these. It was followed by his *Échelle des Femmes*, *Riche et Pauvre*, and the *Mémoires d'un Sans-culotte*. This last deals with the struggle in La Vendée between the royalists and the republicans. *Les Confessions d'un Ouvrier*, *Au Coin du Feu*, *Mémorial de Famille*, *Le Foyer breton*, *L'Homme et l'Argent*, and *Pierre et Jean* were others of his works. But that which is most readily mentioned when the name of Souvestre comes up, is his *Philosophe sous les Toits*.

Léon Gozlan (1806–1866)—already mentioned among the play-writers—born at Marseille, besides furnishing the theatre with numerous dramas, comedies, and vaudevilles, was the author of an archæological romance of history, entitled *Les Tourelles ou Les Châteaux de France*. Another romance of his was *Le Notaire de Chantilly*.

Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) was born at Tarbes. One of the most original and one of the most productive, both in prose and verse, of recent French authors, he belongs, like most of the modern artists in fiction, to the sensuous school. Trained to be an artist with pencil and brush, he has carried the qualities proper to that form of production into literature. There is wonderful picturesqueness in his visions of the past, a fine taste for classic beauty in all his work. But his



fancy is pagan, sensual, and impure in too many of his romances. The voluptuous visions he sets before the mind are powerful creations; but, as is so apt to be the case with an imagination so unrestrained, there is a monotony in his passion for portraying the naked form of woman, which inevitably narrows the sphere of his genius. His most famous novels were *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, *Le Capitaine Fracasse*, and *Spirite*. Shorter sketches of Poesque fancy were *La Morte Amoureuse*, *Une des Nuits de Cléopâtre*, *Clarimonde*, *Arria Marcella*, *Le Pied de la Momie*, *Omphale*, and *Le Roi Canaules*.

Both Ernest Feydeau and Émile Bergerot wrote memoirs inspired by their admiration for Gautier; and Maxime du Camp has recently given in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* interesting reminiscences of literary and artistic life in Paris at the time when he and Gautier and Arsène Houssaye were publishing the *Revue de Paris*. It was in the pages of this review that Baudelaire, Flaubert, and Eugène Fromentin first became known to the public.

Gautier's place as journalist critic was as high as that which he attained as a romancer. But he had to submit to a great deal of over-work, harassed as he was by his creditors and hardly dealt with by his family. During this period, his literary work was done altogether in the printing-office; and he once said: "Schiller, in order to set his fancy working, inhaled the odor of rotten apples; I believe I could not write without smelling the stench of printer's ink."

Among his poems may be named *La Comédie de la Mort* and *Émaux et Camées*. It was from experience gathered from the fate of his first poem, that he warned Flaubert against indulging his passion for following his own theories of art. "I know all about that," said he to Flaubert. "Everybody goes through that phase, just as children have

the measles. When I used to live with Arsène Houssaye, Camille Rogier, and Gérard de Nerval, we had just such ideas. I know what it is to write *chefs d'œuvre*: I wrote *La Comédie de la Mort*; I gave away two volumes of prose in order to have my verses published, of which seventy-five copies were sold. Everybody can write *chefs d'œuvre*, if he will only believe in them."

In his youth, Gautier was one of the most extravagant of the romantic school, emphasizing his artistic and literary creed by wearing a flaming crimson waistcoat and keeping his hair in long waving masses. Of course he outlived these follies, and his genius was evident in masterly creations and polished language even in his most fantastic days. In few literary works is the artist so manifest as in his. He was also a remarkable instance among recent French writers of perfect indifference to political life and complete devotion to the literary profession. He traveled a good deal, and his travels bore fruit in his *Voyage en Italie*, *Voyage en Russie*, *Voyage en Espagne*, and *L'Orient*.

Jean Alphonse Karr was born at Paris in 1808. He has published many romances, in a style remarkable for clearness and precision, and with a singular vein of humor running like an oddly tinted thread through all that he has written. He began with *Sous les Tilleuls*, the story of his first disappointment in love. This, being well received, was followed by *Une Heure trop tard*. After these came *Fa Dièze*, *Vendredi Soir*, *Le Chemin plus court*, *Einerley*, *Geneviève*, *Clotilde*, *Hortense*, *Am Rauchen*, *Pour ne pas être Treize*, *De Midi à Quatorze Heures*, *Feu Bressier*, *Voyage autour de mon Jardin*, *La famille Alain*, *Histoire de Rose et de Jean Duchemin*, *Les Fées de la Mer*, *Clovis Gosselin*, *Agathe et Cecile*, *Fort en Thème*, *Soirées de Sainte-Adresse*, *Les Femmes*, *Raoul*, *Lettres écrites de mon Jardin*, *Au Bord de la Mer*, *Promenades hors de mon Jardin*, *La Pénélope Normande*, *La Pêche en Eau douce et en*

*Eau salée*, the last being a treatise on fishing, of which he is very fond, as he is also of gardening.

Xavier Marmier, famous for his travels as well as for his numerous translations from the German, was born at Pontarlier in 1809. Being a master of most of the languages of northern Europe, he was made professor of foreign literature at Rennes; but he has traveled since in all the continents, studying languages, manners, and literature everywhere. His romances were *Les Fiancés de Spitzberg*, *Gazida*, *Hélène*, *Suzaine*, and others.

Bon Louis Henri Martin was born at St. Quentin in 1810. His first publication was a novel entitled *Tour du Loup*, written in concert with a young friend. After this, he produced many other romances, among them *Tancrède de Rohan*. He conceived, with Lacroix, the idea of compiling a history of France, made up of extracts from different authors, which—Lacroix assisting him only with the first volume—he carried on alone to its completion. His other important works have been *L'Abbaye au Bois, ou la Femme de Chambre*; *Histoire de Soissons*; *De la France, de son génie et de ses destinées*; *Daniel Mauvin*; *L'Unité Italienne et La France*; *Jean Reynaud*; *Pologne et Moscovie*; *Vercingetorix*; *La Russie d'Europe*; *Histoire de France populaire*; and *Études d'archéologie Celta*.

Edouard René Lefébvre Laboulaye, born at Paris in 1811, is one of the ablest and most versatile of modern French writers. He was first known in letters by his *Histoire du droit de propriété en Europe*. Later, he published an essay *Sur de Savigny*, a work entitled *Des Recherches sur la Condition civile et politique des Femmes*, and an essay *Sur les Lois criminelles des Romains*. Besides the works on jurisprudence, which are very learned and very clear in style, and his *Histoire politique des États Unis*, he has produced imaginative and satirical works of a high degree of humor and power.

His best works of political satire are his *Paris en Amérique* and that exquisite satirical fairy-tale, *Le Prince Caniche*, with its inimitable exposition of the "Gobemouchian" theory of government. He has also written, in his *Contes bleus*, some of the best of modern fairy-tales for children; an Arabian romance of much charm entitled *Abdallah*; and a collection of tales, called *Souvenirs d'un Voyageur*.

Louis Veuillot, a writer on the clerical side, was born at Baynes in 1813. He returned from a visit to Rome in 1838 a vehement ultramontane journalist. Among his works, polemical, political, and satirical, were *Les Libres Penseurs*, *L'Esclave Vindex*, *Les Français en Algérie*, *Les Odeurs de Paris*, and *Parfum de Rome*. He also wrote a strikingly original romance entitled *Corbin et d'Aubecourt*.

Auguste Maquet was born at Paris in 1813. Dumas was struck with the ability displayed in his drama, *Bathilde*, and proposed that they should work together. Many of Dumas's romances were thus composed. But in 1851, Maquet began to write under his own name. Among these romances, which Dumas did not retouch, are *Histoire de la Bastille*; *Prisons de l'Europe*; *Belle Gabrielle*; *Le Beau d'Argennes*; *Dettes de Cœur*; *L'Envers et L'Endroit*; *La Maison du Baigneur*; and *La Rose blanche*. He also put upon the stage the opera, *La Fronde*; and the plays, *Le Château de Gautier*, *Le Comte de Lavernie*, and *La Belle Gabrielle*.

Louis Amédée Engène Achard was born at Marseille in 1814. His stories make up more than thirty volumes. Among them may be named the pretty romance of *Belle Rose* and *La Robe de Nessus*, *Maurice de Treuil*, *Madame Rose*, *Le Clos-Pommier*, *L'Ombre de Ludovic*, *La Famille Guillemot*, *Le Duc de Carlepoint*, *Histoire d'un Homme*, *L'Eau qui Dort*, *La Misère d'un Millionnaire*, and *Madame de Sareus*.

Jean Macé, born at Paris in 1815, ranks among the story-tellers only by his *Contes du petit Château*, fairy-tales which in my opinion are very far from

being first-rate, although commended by so high an authority as Laboulaye. While educating the girls of Alsace, Macé conceived the idea of simplifying and popularizing science for children, and began by his *Bouchée de Pain*, which he followed up by a number of other educational works of the same sort. This notion of always instructing, of making very sure to "point a moral," is what makes his so-called fairy-tales so very far away from the ideal type.

Arsène Houssaye was born in 1815. He appeared as an author first in a romance entitled *Couronne de Bluets*. His later work has been principally that of journalist and art-critic. Among his works are *L'Histoire du Quarante-et-unième Fauteuil de l'Académie français*; *L'éventail brisé*; *Une histoire étrange*; *Les larmes de Jeanne*; *Lucie*; *La robe de la mariée*; *Roman des femmes qui ont aimée*; *Une tragique aventure*; *Les trois Duchesses*; and *Vie de Leonardo da Vinci*. I have already mentioned his engaging with Théophile Gautier and Maxime du Camp in the revival of the defunct *Revue de Paris*. This was in October, 1851, and the monthly was kept up until January, 1858.

Paul Henri Corentin Féval was born in 1817. Of his numerous novels, always lively and entertaining, may be named *Alizia Pauli*; *Les Amours de Paris*; *Les Fanfarons du Roi*; *La Maison de Pilate*; *Les Nuits de Paris*; *Le Roi des Gueux*; and *La Fontaine aux Perles*.

Erckmann and Chatrian are two writers, whose works have attained great popularity both in France and abroad, on account of their real merit and the freshness of the scenes and simplicity of the life depicted, as well as the pathos of the stories told, but partly also from the sympathy lately aroused for Alsace, and largely too from the circumstance of constant copartnership in the production of their romances. The marriage of two minds has always been an interesting fact in the history of literature.

Émile Erckmann was born at Phalsbourg in 1822; Alexandre Chatrian, at Soldatenthal in 1826. Since 1847, they have worked together in the composition of their Alsatian tales, signing them with the double name, Erckmann-Chatrian. Their works first attained popularity on the publication of *L'Illustre Docteur Mathéus* in 1859. Among their best romances may be named: *Contes des bords du Rhin*; *Le Fou Yégof*; *Le Joueur de Clarinette*; *La Maison Forestière*; *Le Conscrit de 1813*; *Madame Thérèse*; *L'Invasion et Waterloo*; *Le Grand-père Lebigre*; *L'ami Fritz*; *Les Deux Frères*; and *Brigadier Frédéric*. Some of these stories have also been thrown into the form of comedies. Their play of *Rantzau*, produced by the Comédie française, is a sort of *bourgeois* Romeo and Juliet. It is a dramatization of *Les Deux Frères*.

The younger Dumas, born at Paris in 1824, made his reputation by that immoral but very popular story, *La Dame aux Camélias*, from which the opera of *La Traviata* was afterwards taken. Among his other romances are, *Le Roman d'une Femme*; *La Dame aux Perles*; *Diane de Lys*; *La Femme du Claude*; *Les idées de Madame Aubray*; *Une Visite de Noces*; *Le Bijou de la Reine*; and *La Princesse de Bagdad*. He has also written plays.

One of the most vivacious and fantastic of French romancers, Edmond About, who of late years betook himself wholly to political journalism, is but lately dead. He died in 1885.

Edmond François Valentine About was born at Dieuze, Meurthe, in 1828. His *La Grèce Contemporaine*, an extravagantly satirical sketch of modern Greece, brought him at once into notice. It was followed by the publication in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of his autobiographical romance, *Tolla*. He now tried the stage; but his comedy of *Guillery ou l'Effronté* was a failure. He returned to romance; and *Les Mariages de Paris*, *Le Roi des Montagnes*, *Germaine*, and *Les Echasses de*

*Maître Pierre* showed where his true powers lay. Others of his romances are *L'Homme à l'oreille cassée*, *Trente et Quarante*, *Le nez d'un notaire*, *La Vieille Roche*, *Madelon*, and *L'Infame*. Some of his political pamphlets, such as *La Question Romaine*, and *La Rome Contemporaine*, made a great noise in their day.

As a story-teller, About reminds me of two very dissimilar writers in English literature, the English satirist Peacock and our own Poe in his quality of fantastic romancer. There is no poetic imagination in About's whimsical fancies, however, nor any of that air of a reserved force, which is manifest in the artistic creations of Poe.

Another political writer who has used romance as the vehicle of satire is Rochefort. Victor Henri, Comte de Rochefort-Lucay, was born at Paris in 1830. His father was a great royalist, but his mother taught the youth democratic principles. As a journalist, he was a thorn in the side of the Napoleonic government, and spent much of his time in prison or in exile. After the fall of the Empire, he was involved in the proceedings which resulted in the temporary establishment of the Commune. For complicity in their atrocities, he was tried with other Communists by the government of Thiers, condemned, and imprisoned. Escaping from the penal colony in the Pacific, to which he had been transported, he returned by way of the United States to Europe, was allowed to go back to Paris, on the declaration of amnesty in 1880, and has since then written his story of *Mademoiselle Bismarck*, in which Gambetta and other political leaders are said to figure under fictitious names.

Victor Cherbuliez was born in 1832. After a fantasy-piece entitled *Un Cheval de Phidias*, he published a series of romances. Among these are *Le Comte Kostia*; *Le Prince Vitale*; *Paule Méré*; *Le Roman d'une honnête Femme*; *L'idée de Jean*

*Téterol*; *Les Amours fragiles*; and *Noirs et Rouges*. There is a good deal of artistic power in his works.

Ludovic Halévy, the son of Léon Halévy and nephew of the great composer of music, was born at Paris in 1834. His father, born in 1802, was in his youth a Saint-Simonian, and, later, a professor of literature and author of *Fables*, *La Grèce Tragique*, and a play entitled *Eléctre*. The son wrote the libretti for many well-known operas, and a number of romances. Among these is *L'Abbé Constantin*, a story of exquisite simplicity and sound moral tone. The light touch of Halévy is an artistic gift which all can feel the charm of, but which only trained critics perceive and appreciate.

One of the most delightful purveyors of amusement for children in these days is Madame la Comtesse de Ségur (née Rostopchine), who has written a host of amusing books, always bright and imaginative, sunny and sweet, with never a taint of evil about them. Her *Nouveaux Contes de Fées* is one of the best of fairy-tale books. Her other books are *Après la Pluie le beau Temps*; *Comédies et Proverbes*; *Diloy le Chemineau*; *François le Bossu*; *Jean qui grogne et Jean qui rit*; *La Fortune de Gaspard*; *La Sœur de Gribouille*; *L'Auberge de l'Âge gardien*; *Le General Dourakine*; *Les bons Enfants*; *Les deux Nigauds*; *Les Malheurs de Sophie*; *Le Mauvais Génie*; *Les Petites Filles Modèles*; *Les Vacances*; *Mémoires d'une Ane*; *Pauvre Blaise*; *Quel Amour d'Enfant!* and *Un bon Petit Diable*.

I have but space to touch lightly upon other romancers of note. The passion for crude art, taking form in pictures of coarse and depraved life, in sensual passion untinged by any light of wit or coloring of humor, in minute studies of horrors, seems to have taken possession of those who cater for the public taste in our day.

Ernest Feydeau's *Fanny*, with its "sickly and



unwholesome sentimentality ;" Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, with its revolting scenes ; Adolphe Belot's *Femme de Feu*, with its debasing tendencies ; Zola's Rougon-Macquart family, in the whole of the abominable series in which those brutal specimens of humanity figure, are types of the worst features of the prevailing "realism," so much vaunted by the admirers of that school.

Charles de Bernard, Jules Claretie, Émile Gaboriau, Jules Verne, Alphonse Daudet, make another and a very varied group. I can only mention a few of their stories. De Bernard is responsible for *Les Ailes d'Icare* ; *Un Reau-Père* ; *Gerfaut* ; *Le Nœud Gordien* ; *Le Paratonnerre* ; *Le Paravent* ; *La Peau du Lion*. Among Claretie's works may be named *Une Maîtresse* ; *Les Amours d'un Intérne* ; and *Le Rénégat*.

Gaboriau, who died some years ago, wrote a vast number of police-court stories, with intricate plots woven about crime. The names of some of these are *L'Affaire Lerouge* ; *L'Argent des Autres* ; *La Clique dorée* ; *Les Comédiennes adorées* ; *La Corde au Cou* ; *Le Crime d'Orcival* ; *Le Dossier, No. 113* ; *Les Esclaves de Paris* ; *Mariages d'Aventure* ; *Monsieur Lecoq* ; *La Vie Infernale* ; and *Petit Vieux des Batignolles*.

Verne's flighty and fantastic stories—amusing, if there were any end to that string of extravagancies—are so well known by translations, that it will be enough to name one or two, such as *Autour de la Lune* ; *De la Terre à la Lune* ; *Vingt-mille Lieues sous les Mers* ; *Voyage au Centre de la Terre* ; and *L'île Mystérieuse*.

Daudet, who plumes himself as much on realistic pictures as Zola, though he refrains from sinking quite so low, that is, into utter filth, has acknowledged that his characters are taken from the life, many being drawn from persons now living. This, he states, is the case with all the characters in *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*, except Zizi Delobelle.

Among his other books may be named *Jack*; *Les Lettres de mon Moulin*; *Les Rois en Exile*; *Le Nabab*; and *Numa Roumestan*. His *Tartarin de Tarascon* is an amusing extravaganza, much enjoyed by children. His brother Ernest has written *Le Mari* and *Henriette*, and, recently, a memoir of the youth of himself and Alphonse, entitled *Mon Frère et Moi: Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse*.

Of Zola, it would be superfluous to say more than is contained in these words from a review of his *Pot-Bouille* in an American journal, as they apply with equal fitness to all his books:

"There is not one decent character in the book; not one redeeming trait of manhood; not one pure woman; not one touch of humor; not even an innocent child. It reeks with filth. It is a veritable hot-bed of indescribable grossnesses and will besmear every one who touches it."

This vile literature comprises *La Conquête de Plassans*; *La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret*; *Nana*; *Ventre de Paris*; *L'Assommoir*; and one or two more, the latest being *Pot-Bouille*.

Turning from this reeking atmosphere to pure air, we find it in the sweet society to which Madame Durand introduces us. This is the writer who puts to her books the name of Henry Gréville. Her stories have been mainly of Russian life. But, whatever her theme, she gives always delightful pictures of domestic life and hearty, natural characters. A criticism in the same journal quoted above well says:

"A keenly sympathetic temperament, a pure and limpid style, and the easy flow of natural and graceful dialogue unite in the charm of her work. There is something idyllic in the sweet lessons of self-devotion to another which she is continually teaching, and which, however often they may be told, never lose their original freshness and simple eloquence. . . . And there is not one of her books that is not pure in motive, word, and deed—which is saying a great deal as French novels go."

Her books are numerous. Among them I may name *Cité Menérd*, *La Niania*, *Sonia*, *Dosia*, *Ariadne*, and *La Princesse d'Oghéroff*.

Nor is Madame Durand the only pure romancer. Madame Craven's religious novels, *Récit d'une Sœur*, *Fleurange*, and *Anne Séverin* are also entitled to respect from the lofty tone and untainted atmosphere which they breathe. To her literature also owes *Une Année de Méditations*, *Le Travail d'une Ame*, *La Sœur Nathalie Narischkin*, and *Éliane*.

One of the most popular of living romancers is André Theuriet, the author of *La Chanson du Jardinier* and *Madame Heurteloup*. He has also written *Sous Bois*, *Mademoiselle Guignon*, *Le Mariage de Gérard*, *Ondine*, *La Fortune d'Angèle*, and *Raymonde*.

Édouard, Vicomte de Beaumont-Vassy, a kinsman of Gustave de Beaumont, has written, besides a historical work, several romances of some merit, among them *Une Marquise d'Autrefois*.

To the Marquis de Chennevières we owe some pretty stories about peasant life in the province of Perche. These are told in his *Contes de Saint-Sautin*.

Among other novelists may be mentioned Delpit, the author of *Le Mariage d'Odette* and *Le Fils de Coralie*; Brehat, of whose numerous tales we may mention *L'Auberge du Soleil d'Or*, *La Cabane du Sabotier*, and *La Sorcière Noire*; Capendu, the author of *La Popote* and *Le Pré Catelan*; Berthet, the author of *Le Val d'Andorre* and *La Bastide rouge*; Xavier de Montépin, who wrote among other tales *La Compère Leroux*, *Viveurs d'Autrefois*, *Les Viveurs de Paris*, and *Les Viveurs de Province*; and De Goncourt, the author of *Les Frères Zemganno*, *Gavarni*, and *La Maison d'un Artiste*.

Armand de Pontmartin, who is more famous as a critic, wrote about a dozen novels, of which the most striking were *Or et Clinquant*, *Les Jeudis de Madame Charbonneau*, *Les Mémoires d'un Notaire*,

*Pourquoi je reste à la Campagne*, and *Entre Chien et Loup*.

Madame Charles Reybuad wrote *Mademoiselle de Malepeire*, *Misé Brun*, and *Le Cabaret de Gaubert*. Ponson du Terrail is responsible for a host of sensational stories, such as *Un Crime de Jeunesse*, *Les Fils de Judas*, *Mémoires d'un Gendarme*, *Les Mystères des Bois*, *Nuits du Quartier Breda*, and *Le Secret du Docteur Rousselle*.

There are also Georges Ohnet, whose *Le Maître de Forges* is, I believe, his masterpiece; Jacques Vincent, with his *Le Cousin Noël*; Émile Richebourg, with his *Le Missel de la Grand'mère*; and Lucien Biart, with his *Jeanne de Maurice*.

The opposition of the French Society for the Protection of Animals to the abuses of the practice of vivisection has given origin to a special form of fiction, that devoted to inculcating humanity to the dumb creatures under man's protection. The Society gave a gold medal a few years ago to Aurélien Scholl for his pathetic little story, *Le Roman de Follette*.

A charming story of a wandering troupe of performing animals by Hector Malot, entitled, *Sans Famille*, and translated into English with the title, "No Relations," seems to have been inspired by the same gentle motive. Malot has written a number of novels. *Romain Kalbris* is a romance for children. Of his other works I may name *Cara*, *Le Docteur Claude*, *La Bohème tapageuse*, and *Une Femme d'Argent*.

Pleasing tales have been written by Louis Éhault, Daniel Lesueur, and A. Gennevraye.

## XXI.

## CRITICS AND SCIENTISTS.

D'ISRAELI's epigram on the critics has no application in the case of the best French critics. They have been remarkably able men, who have, besides producing original works of merit, raised criticism into a powerful, attractive, and useful branch of literature. The excellence to which French criticism has attained in modern times is largely due to the new direction given to it by Villemain. His criticism was a great advance upon that of Laharpe and Diderot. His lectures on literature were eloquent and fascinating, delivered in a style of elegant and graceful ease, that possessed all the elasticity which characterizes the best conversation.

Abel François Villemain (1790–1780) was born at Paris, and became in early life a Professor of Literature. His lectures, with those of Guizot and Cousin, always drew immense audiences, and counted among the most brilliant and fruitful intellectual events of the Restoration period. Besides his *Éloges* of Montaigne and Montesquieu, his *History of Cromwell*, his drama entitled *Lascaris, ou les Grecs du XV. Siècle*, translations from Cicero and Pindar, and a history of lyric poetry, he produced *Discours et Mélanges littéraires*, *Tableau de l'Eloquence chrétienne au IV<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Études d'Histoire Moderne*, *Études de Littérature*, and *Chateaubriand, sa Vie, ses Écrits, et son Influence littéraire et politique*. Two delightful volumes were all put forth by him, entitled *Souvenirs contemporains d'Histoire et de la Littérature*.

He mingled for a time, like most of the literary men of the day, in political life, was minister under

Louis Philippe, became a Peer of France and Perpetual Secretary of the Académie Française; but all his earlier and most of his later years were given up to literary labor. One of the weightiest influences which he applied to the discussion of literature was that derived from his study of English literature. Amply stored with all the arsenal of knowledge the past could give, his mind was enabled to keep a just poise between the claims of the classic and the romantic schools and to act as mediator between them. He might justly be styled the first great historical critic.

In the order of time, Patin, Vinet, Chasles, Ampère, Girardin, and even Janin may be entitled to mention before Sainte-Beuve. But his is the great name in criticism, easily the superior of them all, and the artist and poet among critics. He stands naturally by the side of Villemain.

Charles Augustin Saint-Beuve (1804-1869) was born at Boulogne-sur-Mer after his father's death. His mother, a woman of fine education and character, took great pains with his education. Her family was of English origin, and through her he early acquired a knowledge of the English language and literature. Beginning life as a medical student, he was easily drawn into literary circles and critical work by his enthusiasm for Victor Hugo's *Odes et Ballades* and the principles of the romantic school. He was soon moved to try his own powers in the field of poetry. His *Poésies de Joseph Delorme* won the plaudits of Béranger and other literary men, though it did not hit the taste of the public. *Les Consolations*, his next poetic effort, was more successful. With *Pensées d'Août*, he retired from the domain of poetry. His poetry is, in the main, an imitation of the mild muse of Crabbe and Wordsworth, familiar, grave, and self-communing verse for which the French have no great taste—fortunately.

Besides these three collections of poetry, he produced several volumes of *Portraits littéraires*,

*Histoire de la Poésie française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Histoire de Port Royal*, a romance entitled *Volupté*; and, above all, his delightful series of biographical and critical sketches which appeared under the title of *Causeries de Lundi*.

Sainte-Beuve was especially a student of the environment of the writer he was criticising. He made it his first business to inquire who and what the author was; what produced, what developed, and what modified him. He was sympathetic and appreciative in his judgments, but at the same time a little cynical; impartial, tolerant, and inclined to skepticism in religious matters; subtle in analysis; piquant, animated, richly descriptive in style; and remarkably gifted in combining biographic details and suggestive allusions with purely literary criticism.

Henri Joseph Guillaume Patin was born at Paris in 1793. His main claim to a place in literature is his *Étude sur les Tragiques Grecs*.

Alexandre Vinet (1797–1847) was born in the village of Crassier, Canton de Vaud. He was Professor of French Literature successively at Bâle and at Lausanne. His principles led him to infuse into his literary studies Christian and philosophic ideas, while his taste for art enriched and beautified the moral conceptions with which he inspired his essays. *Études sur Pascal*, *Histoire de la Littérature Française au XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Études sur la Littérature Française au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Essais de Philosophie Morale et Religieuse*, *Discours Religieux*, *Études Évangéliques*, and *Écrits Polémiques* constitute his contributions to literature.

Victor Euphémion Philarète Chasles (1798–1873) was born at Mainvilliers. He wrote *Études sur les Hommes et les Mœurs au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle* and other critical works, besides an account of his travels. His specialty was English literature. The articles making up the books issued by Philarète Chasles were

originally contributions to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the *Journal des Débats*.

Jean Jacques Ampère (1800-1864), the son of that André Marie Ampère who has been spoken of already in this work as an illustrious scientist of the Napoleonic period, was born at Lyon. He soon won a brilliant reputation for large and comprehensive literary research, traveling as he did in Italy, Germany, and the Scandinavian lands, and, later, in the eastern Mediterranean, and studying language and literature wherever he went. He was very successful as a professor in inspiring enthusiasm for linguistic and literary studies, and at the same time he wrote on many subjects. His *Littérature et Voyages* told the story of his travels and studies. The brilliancy of his style and the correctness of local coloring and historic fact give great interest to his *La Grèce, Rome et Dante; Études Littéraires d'après Nature; l'Histoire Romaine à Rome; and César*. His *Histoire Littéraire de la France avant le douzième Siècle* is a careful and philosophic *resumé* of the great work of the Benedictines on the same period, giving an account of literary work done on the soil of Gaul before it became France, and at the same time treating of the influence of the Latin, Germanic, and Keltic languages upon the formation of the French tongue.

Jules Gabriel Janin (1804-1874) was born at St. Étienne, in the department of the Loire. Thackeray, in that satirical little sketch on "Dickens in France," which was after his death re-published in "Early and Late Papers," describes our critic thus:

"Who is Janin? He is the critic of France. J. J. in fact—the man who writes a weekly *feuilleton* in the *Journal des Débats* with such indisputable brilliancy and wit, and such a fine mixture of effrontery, and honesty, and poetry, and impudence, and falsehood, and impertinence, and good feeling, that one can't fail to be charmed with the compound, and to look rather eagerly for the Monday paper; Jules Janin is the



man, who, not knowing a single word of the English language, as he actually professes in the preface, *has helped to translate the Sentimental Journey.*"

And, then, Thackeray goes on to abuse him heartily for not liking Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*. But, in spite of this fierce little satire, Jules Janin, the "King of the feuilleton," as Heine called him, is not to be despised. He was for Paris the sort of piquant, racy, jolly old gossip that—not Aristophanes, but some human counterpart of his Dionusos might have been for Athens. There was just the sort of flavor about his wit and wisdom that the true Parisian has a relish for; and the favor of Paris made Janin a rich man before he died.

He wrote a goodly number of novels, among them *L'Ane mort et la Jeune Femme guillotinée*, that ill-omened title with which Thackeray jeers him at every turn in the paper just cited. He wrote also accounts of his little trips. But nothing else that he wrote got him anything like the kind and amount of reputation which he gleaned from his weekly feuilletons, brimming with high spirits and kind, hearty, good feeling, as well as much ready wit and some tenderness. Pontmartin, his fellow critic, said that he could not withhold his affection and sympathy from one "gifted with that faculty of vibration which responds to every incident of public life, to every episode of literary life, by a page, a line, a word—the page true, the line piquant, the word just." It is Pontmartin who gives in eloquent words the story of Janin's creation of the feuilleton, and then adds: "It was in September, 1830, that this dramatic and literary royalty, which still endures, began; and since that time there has never been a play, a book, a work of art, an actor, a great man, an event, a success, a misfortune, a fashion, an absurdity, a caprice, an illustrious death, which has not been reflected in these rapid pages, steno-

graphed by a hand which nothing wearies, under the dictation of each day."

Such and so various was Janin's matter. His manner was all his own. Never was there just such a style, quaint, inverted, fantastic, grotesque, running through the whole gamut of tones with a sort of Merry Andrew lightheartedness, even as the birds sing. In any other man's work it would be rightly thought affected, as would Charles Lamb's; but it was the natural expression of that "fat and witty child," as Dumas called him, just as Lamb's letters show how little affectation there was in the printed Elia. Janin's principal feuilletons were collected and published under the title, *Histoire dramatique et littéraire*.

Nisard stands apart from these critics, as a bitter assailant of the principles of romanticism.

Jean Marie Napoléon Désiré Nisard was born at Châtillon-sur-Seine in 1806. He began as a journalist in opposition to the government of Louis XVIII. After the Revolution of 1830, he at first supported the new government, but was soon once more in opposition. He changed again, however, and in the end was a zealous supporter of Louis Philippe's government. When that government fell, he was for a time in obscurity, but emerged with the rise of Louis Napoleon to power, and thenceforward was somewhat notorious as an advocate of arbitrary measures. Meanwhile, as a critic, he avowed loyalty to the literary spirit of the past, especially ridiculing the excesses of the romantic school in his criticisms of Victor Hugo and De Lamartine. His *Poètes Latins de la Décadence* seems to have been purposely written to point the resemblance between the Latin literature of the age of Lucan and the literature of modern France. His other works, besides translations from the Latin classics, where *Histoire de la Littérature Française, Souvenirs d'Angleterre*, and a volume of *Mélanges*.

Gustave Planche (1808-1857) was an austere and

bitter critic. He wrote, however, in a pure and elegant style; and his essays on English literature were particularly useful to his contemporaries at a time when the French were only beginning to take some interest in the great body of literature produced on the other side of the Channel. His articles appeared in the *Artiste*, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the *Journal des Débats*, and the *Chronique de Paris*.

Ange Henri Blaze de Bury was born at Cavaillon in 1816. He was the son of a celebrated composer of music, and seems to have always taken a great interest in music and musicians. Besides translating "Faust," and other poems of Goethe, he wrote a volume of *Poésies, Études* on Mozart, Rossini, Beethoven, and other contemporary musicians, and an eloquent and enthusiastic account of German literature, called *Écrivains et Poètes de l'Allemagne*.

Sainte-Beuve's greatest rival was the Comte Armand de Pontmartin, born in 1811, and living alternately at Paris and at his estate of Les Angles near Avignon. Sainte-Beuve denied that Pontmartin was a critic at all in the true sense of the term, and described him as "an amiable talker and literary chronicler after the fashion of good society and the drawing-room." I have already spoken of De Pontmartin's novels. His critical essays were republished, from the journals in which they first appeared, in several series, with such titles as *Causeries Littéraires*, *Causeries du Samedi*, and *Nouveaux Samedis*. His religious, moral, and political character remains steadfast in its attachment to the old principles of the aristocratic race to which he belongs. His style is rich, animated, flexible, and impassioned. His literary criticism is keen and earnest, based upon great underlying principles which force him to condemn much that he admits to be forcible and seductive. To Balzac he objects that his art is morbid and corrupting, and that he destroys pure and noble illusions; to

Victor Hugo, that he stirs up animosity between class and class, and that his genius is too often delirious; to Sainte-Beuve, that he lacks genuineness, has no convictions, and is a time-server, unhappy, irascible, and sour in temper beneath his fine phrases. There is bitter satire in all this, but enough of truth to have made it very telling.

Émile Montégut was born at Limoges in 1826. His article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* on the philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson gave him his first reputation. His criticisms were extended over the field of contemporary French, English, and American literature. He also translated Macaulay's History of England and Emerson's Essays.

One of the youngest and most brilliant of French critics is Taine. He has the credit, even among English and American critics, of having produced the best of all histories of English literature. His knowledge of this subject is far beyond that possessed by Chateaubriand, Philarète Chasles, and others who have treated it in French.

Hippolyte Adolphe Taine was born at Vouziers, Ardennes, in 1828. His earlier works were essays on La Fontaine and Livy, and a work entitled *Les Philosophes Français au dix-neuvième Siècle*. Later on, he brought out his *Essais de Critique et d'Histoire*, his *Philosophie de l'Art*, and his famous *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*. In this last he carries to its extreme the doctrine of environment and of original race-characteristics, and with the most brilliant diction heaps up facts upon facts, with a breathless prodigality of circumstance and of illustration, to build up the theory that is to account for every phenomenon of genius. It is all very fine and philosophical, but perhaps ignores too readily the force of individual character and gifts quite irrespective of any known or knowable cause in past or present. Taine has since written *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, *Les Origines de la France Contem-*

poraine, *Voyage aux Pyrénées, Voyage en Italie, and Vie et Opinions de M. Graindorge.*

Émile Gigault de la Bédollière, born in 1814, was in early life a favorer of Saint-Simon's doctrines; but he outgrew those notions. Becoming a journalist, he produced a great number of essays, romances, poems, and translations. His *Soirées d'Hiver, Les Industriels, Histoire de la Garde Nationale, and Mœurs et Vie privée des Français* are his most important original works.

Many of the professors of literature in French colleges have written excellent histories of French literature, either in whole or in part. Among these I should name Émile Chasles, who wrote a *Histoire Nationale de la Littérature Française*, divided into four books of *Origines*, namely *Le Génie Gaulois, ou la Race; Les Gallo-Romains, et la Civilisation; Les Gallo-Francis, et l'Épopée; and Les Gallo-Bretons, et l'Esprit Romainesque.* This work was published in 1870.

To Geruzez we owe *La Littérature Française du Moyen Age aux Temps Modernes* and *La Littérature Française pendant la Révolution.* He is a spirited and agreeable writer.

To Demogeot we are indebted for *Tableau de la Littérature Française au 17<sup>e</sup> Siècle.* Demogeot lays especial stress upon the revelations which the old memoirs give of the inner social life.

To De Véricour we owe *Milton et la Poésie Epique* and a valuable work in English on Modern French Literature, bringing us down to the Revolution of 1848. De Véricour gave especial weight to philosophical and political developments.

Other historians of French literature besides those already named are Aubertin, Baron, Saint-Marc Girardin, Godefroy, Nettement, Albert, and Charpentier. Baret, Bida, Fauriel, and Gaston Paris on old French and Provençal literature; Villemarque on that of Bretagne; Assailly on the Minnesingers; Bossert on German literature down to the Middle

Ages, Courrière on Slavonic literature; Gidel on modern Greek literature; Roux on modern Italian literature, represent some of the authorities in the critical study of literatures.

In the field of biography, Sainte-Beuve supplies sketches of Boileau, Chateaubriand, Chénier, De Comines, Courier, Delavigne, Diderot, Fénelon, Hugo, La Bruyère, La Fontaine, La Harpe, Lamartine, Lamennais, La Rochefoucauld, Lebrun, Lesage, Littré, Malherbe, Marivaux, Marmontel, Massillon, Millevoye, Molière, De Musset, Racine, Reynard, Renan, Saint-Pierre, Saint-Simon, Scribe, George Sand, Madame de Staël, De Tocqueville, and De Vigny.

Loménie gives us *Beaumarchais et son Temps*; Littré, *Comte et la Philosophie Positive*; Guizot, *Corneille et son Temps* and a number of other lives; Flourens, lives of Buffon and Cuvier; Levallois, D'Haussonville, and Pons, each a work on Sainte-Beuve; Walkenaer, *Memoires sur Madame de Sévigné*; and De Falloux, *Madame Swetchine, sa Vie et ses Œuvres*.

Here will fitly come the consideration of a few essayists on moral, religious, or philosophical subjects, whose works cannot be conveniently classed under any general head.

Émile Edmond Saisset (1814-1863) was born at Montpellier. Besides furnishing a great many articles on philosophy to the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques* and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, he produced an essay *Sur la Philosophie et la Religion au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, and another *De Philosophie Religieuse* which have been highly commended.

Jean Charles Lévêque was born at Bordeaux in 1818. His work entitled *La Science du Beau Étudiée dans ses Principes, ses Applications et son Histoire*; his *Études de Philosophie Grecque et Latine*; and his *Du Spiritualisme dans l'Art*, have all won high honor.

Jules François Suisse Simon was born at Lorient

in 1814. He was a follower of Cousin in philosophy; but, having entered political life, he has made a greater name there than in literary work. He refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Second Empire, but after its downfall became a prominent personage in the political world. Among his works are *Le Devoir*, *La Religion naturelle*, *La Liberté de Conscience*, *La Liberté*, *L'Ouvrière*, *L'École*, and *L'Ouvrier de huit Ans*. He is remarkable for independence of thought, for his steady maintenance of the rights of the people, his defense of liberty of the press, and of the interests of the laboring class, especially women laborers.

Pierre Jules Hetzel, whose pseudonym was P. J. Stahl, was born in 1814. He has been called the French Sterne. His chief works are *Scènes de la Vie des Animaux*, *Le Diable à Paris*, *Tom Pouce*, *Histoire d'un Homme enrhumé*, *Le Voyage d'un Étudiant*, and *Bêtes et Gens*. His sketches were highly praised by Madame Dudevant and Louis Ratisbonne.

Among the friends and ardent admirers of Lamennais was a young poet, Georges Maurice de Guérin, who died before reaching the age of thirty. His memory was kept sacred—even more than by the few remains of his published a generation later—through the charming journal and letters of his sister, Mademoiselle Eugénie de Guérin, whose devout and poetical soul shines sweetly in the naïve style which was so natural to her. The book issued with the literary remains of Maurice de Guérin is entitled *Journal, Lettres et Fragments de M. Guérin*. His sister's writings are issued with the same title, except that *Mademoiselle Eugénie* takes the place of *M.*

One of the greatest names in the France of our days is that of Rénan. Unquestionably a great thinker in many fields of thought, his attitude toward Christianity has done much to obscure the real merit of his character and writings for those of us who believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed

the Son of God, and that he came into the world to save sinners.

Joseph Ernest Renan was born at Fréguier in 1823. He early won distinction in linguistic studies, and was especially noted for his acquaintance with the Semitic languages. His first work of importance was his *Histoire générale et Systèmes comparés des Langues Sémitiques*. This was followed by his *Étude de la Langue Grecque au Moyen Age*. His other historical, linguistic, and ethical works were his *Sur Averroes et l'Averroïsme*, his *Mission de Phénice*, *Études d'Histoire Religieuse*, *Essais de Morale et de Critique*, *La Réforme Intellectuelle et Questions Contemporaines*, *Dialogues et Fragments Philosophiques*, and *Mélanges d'Histoire et de Voyage*. He has also written a singular satirical poem called *Caliban*.

But the writings by which he has most stirred the world are those which make up a series to which he gives the name, *Origines du Christianisme*. The first part of this was *La Vie de Jésus*. This was followed by the *Histoire des Apôtres*, *Saint Paul*, *Antichrist*, and *La seconde Génération Chrétienne: Les Évangiles*.

Renan began with a proneness to dissent from recognized religious and political creeds, with a scorn for mere utilitarian or materialistic conceptions in philosophy, and with a vague elevation of sentiment, which powerfully drew him towards the moral side of Christ's teachings. Sympathizing rather with the transcendental school of thought than with materialist skepticism, he was essentially an idealist, and, like all gifted idealists from Plato to John Ruskin, a great word-painter.

Rejecting miracles, however, with as firm a belief in the immutability or the secularly slow mutability of nature as the narrowest of our modern philosophers, and trying to explain the presence of the miraculous element in the narrative that has come down to us, not by the theory of imposture, but by



that of reverent wonder producing innocent distortion of the facts, he attempts on this hypothesis to reconstruct the history of Christ and the early Church. Of course, it all results in his calling on us to believe far greater wonders in the moral sphere than any recorded miracles are for us in that of the intellect. There is also something so illogical and uncritical in the arbitrary rejection of one statement of a series of authors—some of them stating facts as eye-witnesses—to accept other statements made at the same time, and to build huge inferences upon them, that one is apt to refuse Renan credit for the really fine things he does say, and the good intention which prompts him throughout. Some goodwill is due for his persistent protest against the materialistic tendencies of the age.

Renan takes high rank among philologists, and may well lead us to name a few of his compeers in this field. Perhaps the most distinguished of them was Littré, who died in 1881.

Maximilien Paul Émile Littré was born at Paris in 1801. He early gave himself up to linguistic studies. He had, however, also studied medicine; and his first publication, *Œuvres d'Hippocrate*, was in that field. Taking a great interest in Comte's doctrines, he next put forth a lucid exposition of his system in *De la Philosophie Positive*. Master of the old French used by the Trouvères, he published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an article called *La Poésie Homérique et l'Ancienne Poésie Française*, in which he gave a translation of the first book of the Iliad into old French, it opens thus :

“ Chante l'ire, ô deesse, d'Achile fil Pelée,  
Greveuse et qui douloir fit Grece la louée  
Et choir ens en enfer mainte âme desevrée,  
Baillant le cors as chiens et oiseaus en curée  
Ainsi de Jupiter s'acomplit la pensée,  
Du jour où la querelle se leva primerin  
D' Atride roi des hommes, d'Achile le divin.”

Other books of his, besides the "Dictionary," which was the great work of his life, were *Histoire de la Langue Française*, *Paroles de Philosophie Positive*, *Auguste Comte et la Philosophie Positive*, *Auguste Comte et Stuart Mill*. His article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, *Des Origines organiques de la Morale*, brought on him the accusation of atheism. But the work which gave him his greatest renown was his *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française*, the most complete thing of the kind in any language.

Other eminent philological writers are Alart, Barbier de Meynard, Boissier, Chatelain, Cornu, Bida, Cosquin, David, D'Herbomez, Godefroy, Gras, Luchaire, Gaston Paris, Rolland, Senart, Thomas, and Tournier. Graux and Paulin Paris have recently died.

Turning to writers dealing with religion on the philosophical and historical side, we have Jean Joseph François Poujoulat (1808—1880), who began his career by travelling and laboring with Michaud, when the historian was studying the scenes of the Crusades. His principal works were *Histoire de Jérusalem*, *Histoire de St. Augustin*, and a review of Renan's *Vie de Jésus*.

Étienne Vacherot was born in 1809. He was, under the ban of the Second Empire for refusing to take the oath of allegiance, and was also imprisoned for his *La Démocratie*. His principal works were *Histoire critique de l'École d'Alexandrie*, *La Métaphysique et la Science*, *Essai de Philosophie critique*, and *La Religion*.

An able writer on the history of the Early Church, J. B. Charpentier, was also a writer on literary history. The work I refer to is entitled *Les Études sur les Pères de l'Église*. The literary works are *Histoire de la Renaissance des Lettres en Europe au XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Essai sur l'Histoire littéraire du Moyen Age*, and *Tableau de la Littérature Française aux XV<sup>e</sup> et XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècles*. He also published in 1853 a *Logique Française*.

One of the most eminent of Protestant theologians is Pressensé. Edmond Déhault de Pressensé was born at Paris in 1824. He studied in Swiss and German universities, became the friend of Neander during his student life at Berlin, took high rank as a preacher, writer, and legislator, and became widely known as a vigorous advocate of moderate principles in government, free education, and liberal views on most subjects. His works are *Conférences sur le Christianisme dans son Application aux Questions sociales*, *Du Catholicisme en France*, *Histoire des Trois Premiers Siècles de l'Eglise Chrétienne*, *L'Ecole Critique et Jésus-Christ*, *La Liberté religieuse en Europe depuis 1870*.

Bishop Dupanloup was a vigorous writer on the Catholic side. Félix Antoine Philibert Dupanloup (1802-1878) was born in Savoy. He was much interested in the subject of education. Among his works are *De l'Education*, *La femme studieuse*, *L'Enfant*, and *Le Mariage Chrétien*.

Naming now a few of those who have been most remarkable in science or in writings on industrial progress, we have to consider the works of a great surgeon like Velpeau, of a master in archæological research like Quatrefages, of a microscopist and discoverer of the germs of disease like Pasteur, of an authority in architecture like Viollet-le-Duc, and of an authority in taste and the philosophy of digestion like Brillat-Savarin.

Alfred Armand Louis Marie Velpeau (1795-1867) was one of the greatest of surgeons. Among the works which he found time to write; in the midst of his arduous duties, the most valuable are his *Traité de l'Anatomie Chirurgicale* and his *Nouveaux Éléments de Médecine Opératoire*.

Claude François Lallemand (1790-1854), born at Metz, was also a famous medical authority. His most important work was *Recherches anatomico-pathologiques sur l'Encéphales et ses Dépendances*.

Félix Archimède Pouchet (1800-1872), born at

Rouen, was a most prolific writer on medical matters. His experiments on spontaneous generation were made in opposition to those of Pasteur. His most important works were *Théorie Positive de l'Ovulation spontanée et de la Fécondation des Mammifères et de l'Espèce humaine*, *Histoire des Sciences naturelles au Moyen Age*, *Traité de la Génération spontanée*, *Les infiniment Grands et les infiniment Petits*.

Claude Servais Pouillet (1791-1868) was a much-admired lecturer. He also invented instruments for measuring the varying compressibility of gases, originated a theory of the cause of the sun's heat, and invented an instrument for measuring its heat. He wrote many scientific works on electricity, the elasticity of fluids, the latent heat of vapors, the height, speed, and direction of clouds, and other subjects of kindred nature. His principal work was *Notions générales de Physique et de Météorologie*.

Louis Pasteur, the great chemist, was born at Dôle in 1822. His discoveries have been exceedingly valuable to mankind, and there is good reason to hope that through his researches measures may be taken by which many terrible scourges of humanity will cease to ravage civilized lands, even as the advance of smallpox has been checked by inoculation and vaccination. His writings have been *Nouvel Exemple de Fermentation*, *Études sur le Vin*, *Études sur le Vinaigre*, *Études sur la Maladie des Vers de Soie*, and a few other works. His controversy with Pouchet on the subject of spontaneous generation has already been mentioned. Pasteur argued against spontaneous generation, and his experiments have proved that all fermentation and many forms of disease are due to the development of germs of microscopic minuteness. Pasteur was a pupil of the famous chemist Dumas; and his first step in the great discoveries he made was taken in conducting the investigation, committed to him by Dumas, into the disease which threatened to destroy all the silk-worms of France and Italy.

One of the most eminent of living scientists is Jean Louis Armand de Quatrefages de Bréau, born in 1810. His essay entitled *Théorie d'un Coup de Canon*, his work *Sur les Aérolithes* and that *De l'Extraversion de la Vessie*, his *Études sur les Types inférieurs de l'Embranchement des Anneles*, his *Physiologie comparée, Métamorphose de l'Homme et des Animaux* indicate the variety of his studies. He has also written *Les Polynésiens et leur Migrations*, *Charles Darwin et ses Précurseurs Français*, *La Race Prussienne*, and *L'Espèce humaine*.

One of the greatest of recent French geologists was Jean Baptiste Elie de Beaumont (1798-1874), born at Canon. In conjunction with Dufrénoy, he devoted many years to the preparation of a geological map of France. His chief writings were *Coup d'Œil sur les Mines*, *Observations Géologiques sur les différentes Formations sur le Système des Vosges*, *Recherches sur quelquesunes des Révolutions de la Surface du Globe*, and *Voyage Métallurgique en Angleterre*.

Here, perhaps, though somewhat out of place, may be mentioned a writer in French, who takes rank as the father of geology as a science, the great Swiss investigator, Horace Benedict de Saussure (1740-1799), born at Conches near Geneva. Four years before his death Geneva was annexed to France. Hence he may in more than one sense be considered as entitled to a place in French literature. His *Voyages dans les Alpes* marked an era in the history of modern science. Besides this work and several in Latin, he wrote *Observations sur l'Écorce des Feuilles et des Pétales*, and *Sur l'Hygrométrie*. This last Cuvier considered one of the most important contributions to science in that age.

One of the ablest chemists and writers on chemical subjects France has produced is Jean Baptiste Dumas, born at Alais in the department of Gard in 1800. Lavoisier, about 1787, when he gave it its earlier nomenclature, may be almost said to have

organized chemistry into a science. Other Frenchmen, Berthollet, Fourcroy, Vauquelin, Gay-Lussac, Becquerel, Ampère, Decandolle, and Prévost, did much to further its progress. Dumas's contributions to the advance of the science have been very important. His chief works are *Traité de Chimie appliquée aux Arts*, *Leçons sur la Philosophie chimique*, and *Essai sur la Statique chimique des Êtres Organisés*.

A writer who has done much to popularize scientific studies is Jean François Elisée Reclus, born in the Gironde in 1830. Driven into exile by the establishment of the Second Empire, he traveled in many parts of the world. Returning to France in 1857, he became successively editor of several important periodicals, and wrote his books of travel and his *La Terre*. He was implicated in the disorders of the Commune, and again became an exile, to return however under the general amnesty. His *Les Continents* and *L'Océan* are handsomely illustrated books.

Figuier and Flammarion also have been prolific writers on scientific subjects.

Guillaume Louis Figuier was born in 1819. His works are *La Terre avant le Déluge*, *La Terre et les Mers*, *Histoire des Plantes*, *Zoophytes et Mollusques*, *Les Insectes*, *Les Poissons*, *Les Mammifères*, *L'Homme primitif*, *Les Races humaines*, *Savants de l'Antiquité*, *Savants du Moyen Age*, *Savants de la Renaissance*, *Savants du 12<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Savants du 18<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, *Le Savant du Foyer*, and *Les grandes Inventions*.

Camille Flammarion, eminent as an astronomer, was born in 1842. He has been, like Reclus, an expert in balloon ascensions. His principal works are *La Pluralité des Mondes Habités*, *Les Mondes imaginaires et les Mondes réels*, *Les Merveilles célestes*, *Dieu dans la Nature*, *Histoire du Ciel*, *Contemplations scientifiques*, *Voyages aériens*, *L'Atmosphère*,

*Histoire d'un Planète, Les Terres du Ciel.* His style is very animated and picturesque.

Guillemin is another author of illustrated scientific books, such as *Les Comètes, Le Ciel, Les Phénomènes de la Physique, Les Applications de la Physique.*

In architecture we have Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, born at Paris in 1814. Besides his *Histoire d'une Maison*, and other works on architectural subjects, he has written a *Mémoire sur la Défense de Paris.*

In literature on the arts we have Auguste Alexandre Philippe Charles Blanc (1813-1882), born at Castres and trained to be an engraver. He held for many years the post of Director of the Fine Arts. He has published many works on artists, among which is his finely illustrated *Histoire des Peintres de toutes les Écoles: École Française, École Hollandaise, École Flamande, École Anglaise, École Espagnole, École Italienne, École Allemande.* One of his most valuable works is his *Grammaire des Arts du Dessin.*

Other writers on art are Jacquemart, with his *Histoire de la Céramique de tous les Temps*; Duplessis, with his *Les Merveilles de la Gravure*; and Sauzay, with his *La Verrerie depuis les Temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos Jours.*

In gastronomy, we have the famous Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826), with his wise and witty lucubrations on the art of living well, in his *Physiologie du Goût.*

## XXII.

## FRENCH WRITERS OF LOUISIANA.

In 1682, La Salle descended the Mississippi, claimed for France the magnificent valley, and named the land Louisiana, in honor of the Grand Monarque.

But the first French colony settled in the great valley was that planted by Iberville at Biloxi in 1699. The colony was removed to New Orleans by Bienville in 1706, and remained under French rule until 1762, when it was by secret treaty transferred to Spain, which took possession some years later and held it until 1800. It was then again restored to France. Three years later, Napoleon sold it to the United States for fifteen millions of dollars.

The vast region originally embraced under the term Louisiana has been cut up into a number of different States. But much the larger portion of the French population are those whose ancestors settled in the lands now within the State of Louisiana.

These French families, amid all the changes that have come over the land, have clung closely to their language and traditions. Their mode of life has remained unchanged, and they have largely indulged in the practice of sending their sons to France for their education. Many wealthy families have gathered large libraries; the literature of the fatherland has been, as a general rule, the only literature read; refined and cultivated social influences in the great sea-port have increased the devotion to this literature; and there has naturally been a tendency to develop a home literature in the tongue



still used in the bosom of very many families, where English is never heard.

A few, at least, of these writers should be given a place in a sketch of French literature prepared for use in this country. At the head of this literary body, by common consent, stands Gayarré, who has for a series of years been giving interesting *Conférences* in New Orleans on the scenes and incidents of the first French Revolution, after a life spent in literary labor in two tongues, principally on historical works.

Charles E. Arthur Gayarré was born in 1805 of an old Louisianian family of Spanish descent. His first work was an essay on the history of his native State. This was followed by his *Histoire de la Louisiane*, which reached the period of Spanish rule, and was warmly praised in France for its clearness, simplicity, and good taste. Several other works on Louisiana, its Romance, and its History; a dramatic novel; a history of Philip II., of Spain; a comedy; some pamphlets, and some lectures, make up the rest of what he has published, and these writings were in English.

Victor Séjour, an actor as well as dramatic author, whose life has been mainly spent in France, though he was of New Orleans parentage, was born in that city in 1809. His chief works have been *Retour de Napoléon*, a drama in verse entitled, *Diégarias*, *La Chute de Séjan*, a prose drama called *Richard III.*, *L'Argent du Diable*, *Les Noces Venitiennes*. *André Gérard*, and *Le Martyr du Cœur*, the last written in conjunction with Brésil. •

François Dominique Rouquette was born at New Orleans in 1810, and educated at Nantes in France. He has published two collections of poems, *Les Meschacébénnes* and *Fleurs d'Amérique*, to the latter of which writers like Méry and Émile Deschamps have awarded high praise.

The brother of this poet, the Abbé Adrien Rouquette, also a poet, has died but a short time ago. A

famous recluse, who only came to the city to get books, he was reputed to be familiar with all the wild things of the woods, from the Indians to the birds. Like his brother, he was born at New Orleans and educated at Nantes. To his first publication, *Les Savanes, Poésies Américaines*, Sainte-Beuve, Auguste Brizeau, and Barthélemi all gave a cordial welcome. This collection was followed by a volume of sacred poems, entitled *Fleurs Sauvages*, and a work in eloquent prose called *La Thébaïde en Amérique, ou Apologie de la Vie Solitaire et Contemplative*. His later works were *L'Antoniade, ou la Solitude avec Dieu: Poème Erémétique*; *Le Conciliabule Infernal*; and *Poèmes Patriotiques*. He also issued some of his poems in English.

Charles Deléry was born in 1815, of a Louisianian family of Acadian French origin. He studied medicine in Paris. His earliest production was a pamphlet, *Essai sur la Liberté*. Later, he published *Études sur les Passions*; *Fièvre Jauné*; *Confédérés et Fédéraux*; and *Mémoire sur l'Épidémie de Fièvre Jaune qui a régné à la Nouvelle Orléans et dans les Campagnes*.

Charles Oscar Dugué was born at New Orleans in 1821, and educated in Paris. His first publication was a volume of poems, entitled *Essais Poétiques*. This was followed by a drama called *Milo ou la Mort de la Salle*, and another play, entitled *Le Cygne ou Mingo*. He has also written some philosophical works.

L. Placide Canonge, now music-critic for *L'Abeille*, the able French paper of New Orleans, has been a prolific writer for the stage. He was born in 1822, and educated in Paris. He began his literary work with a vaudeville, *Le Maudit Passeport*. Following this, came the plays of *Gaston de St. Elme*, *L'Ambassadeur d'Autriche*, *Un Grand d'Espagne*, *Histoire sous Charles Quint*, *France et Espagne*, *Comte de Monte Cristo*, *Comte de Carmagnola*, and the comedy of *Qui perd gagne*. He

re-published also from Girardin's paper, *La Presse*, political articles which he had contributed to it during the eventful struggles of 1848. This series was entitled *Institutions Américaines*. His lyrics are remarkable for fire, sweetness, and tenderness. The most touching of these is his *Brise du Sud*, written in exile. Educated in France at the time when the enthusiasm of the romantic school was at its highest, he has imbibed all the fervor and freshness which that school wished to import into literature.

Henri Vignaud was born in 1828. He began life as a journalist in the town of Thibodaux, Louisiana. His first work was *L'Anthropologie*, published serially in *La Renaissance Louisianaise*, a periodical established in New Orleans in 1860 by himself, Canonge, and Hiriart. He went to Paris in 1862, engaged in journalism there, and became later a member of the United States legation in Paris, after having had some diplomatic experience as *attaché* to the Roumanian legation. He holds high rank as a theatrical critic. His literary work has consisted chiefly of critical work for journals and memorials to scientific societies. Albert Delpit and Eugène Guiraud should be named along with Vignaud, as Louisianians of literary mark now resident in Paris. I have already spoken of their novels, plays, and operas.

Adolphe Calongue was born at New Orleans in 1836. His literary productions have been poems, among which may be mentioned his *Hymne à la Mémoire de Madame la Générale Beauregard* and his ode *Sur le Supplice de Maximilien*.

In 1847, there appeared a series of sketches, spirited and graphic, of the celebrities of the New Orleans of that time, forty-eight in all. It was published anonymously, but is generally accredited to Cyprien Dufour, an able lawyer of the Crescent City. The work is entitled *Esquisses Locales*, and contains felicitous por-

traitures of Gayarré, l'Abbé Rouquette, and Placide Canonge, as they were thirty-five years ago.

There was published a few years ago in New Orleans a romance, *L'Habitation des St-Ybars*, by Dr. Alfred Mercier, Secretary of the Athénée Louisianaise. This work is intended to depict life on a Louisianian plantation before the war, but the narrative laps over the war, and presents also a picture of its results. The style is vivid and glowing, and some of the scenes are attractive; but the general spirit of the book is sombre, and it closes with a perfect glut of horrors. It surely can not be in all respects a true delineation of family life among the French people of Louisiana. The most interesting thing in the book is its too infrequent introduction of the patois used by the colored people, the Creole or Gumbo French.

Of recent publication also are *L'Histoire des Etats-Unis, suivie de l'Histoire de la Louisiane*, by Madame M. D. Girard; and *Histoire de la Louisiane, racontée aux Enfants Louisianais*, by Madame Laure Audry.

Among the poets of an earlier day should have been mentioned Louis Allard and Constant Lepousé.

Since the manuscript of this work passed out of my hands, works of fiction have appeared in France, which so fully substantiate the confident hope, expressed in the foregoing pages, of the re-appearance of better taste and purer genius, that I must name at least one or two of these recent works before closing.

A work of admirable humor and freshness of style and spirit, *La Neuvaïne de Colette*, appeared anonymously a winter ago in the pages of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. It was welcomed with eager praise by a public sated at last with the dreary meannesses and revolting details of the so-called realistic school. It became immensely popular.

A still more favorably received story, because of

its patriotic purpose—it deals with the stress of the Franco-Prussian war—was *Mademoiselle Solange*, by François de Julliot. Its well-drawn characters, its provincial atmosphere, its truth to nature in the delineation of the heroine's growth in character and her waking to nobler aims in life at the touch of feeling for her country's needs, make it a delightful romance.

Family affection, girlish grace, womanly pride and strength of character, purity of life, and nobility of purpose, triumphing over self-seeking and love of luxury, are still to be found in the works of genius offered us by French literature, as well as by all the great literatures of the world.

A great people, with a great language and a literature in the past of immense range and variety, cannot continue to produce imaginative art of a wholly debasing kind. Genius is a ferment that clears in the end, and leaves as its product a pure and refreshing wine.



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